THE INDO-GERMANS

An "Aryan" Romance

by

Robert Bruce Cowan

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Comparative Literature in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract
The Indo-Germans: An "Aryan" Romance
By Robert Bruce Cowan
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While the German National Socialist appropriation of the Sanskrit term "Aryan" was used for the most illegitimate purposes of racially based nationalism, its promotion across twentieth-century Europe was the result of a cluster of exotic linguistic and philosophical ideas related to India, found first in works of Greco-Roman historians, and currently in those of Hindu nationalists. Such ideas and fears about origin, eschatology, nationalism, and nihilism were to expand, particularly during the Enlightenment and Romantic periods, in a tangle of misinterpretation and misappropriation that largely stood outside the clearly exploitative problems of colonialism itself. This dissertation attempts to trace the history of ideas that lead eighteenth and nineteenth century English, French, and primarily German thinkers to derive nihilistic philosophies from works of Sanskrit literature that are usually considered to be life affirming. While the contributions to the Western history of ideas of figures such as Friedrich Schlegel and Schopenhauer are indubitable, this study shows in new detail how they also helped create a great deal of confusion and paradox about ideas of origin, ontology, and teleology. This dissertation argues that the use of ancient Indian religious thought in constructing a German national identity went particularly awry when the crucial Hindu-Buddhist distinction between the

pursuit of material satisfaction and the pursuit of material transcendence was misconstrued.

Acknowledgments

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List of Abbreviations

PP	Schopenhauer, Arthur. Parerga and Paralipomena. 2 vols. E. F. J. Payne, trans. Oxford: Clarendon, 1974.
PWG	Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. Sämtliche Werke: Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte. Bdn. VII & VIII. Leipzig: Felix Meiner, 1919.
SW	Schopenhauer, Arthur. Sämtliche Werke. 5 Bdn. Wiesbaden: F. A. Brockhaus, 1972.
USWI	Schlegel, Friedrich. Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier: ein Beitrag zur Begründung der Altertumskunde. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1977.
WWR	Schopenhauer, Arthur. The World as Will and Representation. 2 vols. E. F. J. Payne, trans. New York: Dover, 1958.

"Ipsos Germanos indigenas crediderim."[i]

– Tacitus, De origine et situ Germanorum (AD 98)

"Anything can be believed if one cites the authority of the *Veda*, [even] if one takes some passage from the *Veda*, juggles it, gives it the most impossible meaning and murders everything reasonable in it."

– Swami Vivekenanda (c.1890)[ii]

"Europa ist ursprünglich, und solang es sich true bleibt, politisch und geistig eine gegenasiatische Macht. Das deutsche Wort »Abendland« hat einen volleren Klang. Es meint, im Gegensatz zum Morgenland, eine Bewegung zum Ende hin, die zwar im Osten beginnt, sich aber im Westen vollendet. »Die Weltgeschichte geht von Osten nach Westen, denn Europa ist schlechthin das Ende der Weltgeschichte, Asien der Anfang […]. Hier geht die äußerliche, physische Sonne auf und im Westen gehtsie unter; dafür ersteigt aber dort die innere Sonne des Selbstbewußtseins, die einen höheren Glanz verbreitet« [Hegel, Philosophie der Geschichte], nämlich den Glanz des absolut freien und darum auch kritischen Geistes, dessen Gefahren und Größe der osten bis heute nicht kennt."

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[i] All Germans believe themselves to be native to their soil.

[ii] Cited in Dorothy Matilda Figueira, Aryans, Jews, Brahmins: Theorizing Authority through Myths of Identity (Albany: State U of New York P, 2002).

– Karl Löwith, »Der europäische Nihilismus Betrachtungen zur geistigen Vorgeschichte des europäischen Krieges« (1983).[iii]

[iii] "Europe is primordially and, as long as it remains true to itself, politically and spiritually a power that is opposed to the Asiatic. The German word *Abendland* ["West," literally "land of the evening" (tr.)] has a fuller sound. It signifies, in contrast to *Morgenland* ["East," literally "land of the morning" (tr.)], a movement toward the end, a movement which surely begins in the East but which completes itself in the West. "World history goes from East to West, for Europe is simply the end of world-history, and Asia the beginning… Here the external, physical sun rises, and it sets in the West; but in order that this occur, the inner sun of self-consciousness must ascend there, casting a higher kind of radiance" [Hegel, Philosophy of History], namely the radiance of absolutely free and hence critical spirit, whose dangers and greatness are as yet unknown in the East" (Karl Löwith, Martin Heidegger and European Nihilism 173).

Introduction

NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF

The Goths had no notion of India. Neither the land nor its societies could have been further from their consciousness, were they even to be of a single mind. As early Germanic tribes swept down from Scandinavia between AD 150 and 455, attacking cities as far away as Carthage and Constantinople, sacking the Western, weaker half of the empire that Diocletian had split in two – a split that established the Byzantine empire, which would ensure the survival of Greco-Roman ideas for at least a thousand years – they were not thinking about India at all. As Jutes, Angles, and Saxons invaded the British Isles, Franks and Burgundians overthrew the Gauls, Vandals and Visigoths destroyed Iberian settlements, and Lombards and Ostrogoths stormed down the Italian peninsula, the South Asian subcontinent meant nothing to them. Yet, India would eventually emerge to hold a special place in the minds of Germans, as they would come to be called. More than a millennium after the Teutonic invasions, many Germanic luminaries would come to think of all European peoples as descending from early Germanic tribes, and of the Indian peninsula as such groups' original homeland, their *Urheimat*.

Ironically, such associations began in the minds of the people that the early Germanic tribes were conquering: the Romans. Documented speculation that both the Greco-Latin and Germanic peoples may have migrated to Europe from the Himalayas and the Ganges Plain began around the time of the fall of Alexander the

Great and was to continue, in some quarters, straight through into the middle of the twentieth century, or until around the fall of Adolf Hitler. More important than genealogies derived from such potential migrations, however, was the notion – that took root among the Romans themselves – that many of Europe's earliest philosophical ideas came from India. While this notion would persist throughout the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment, Indian religious and philosophical texts did not begin to be translated into Romance or Germanic languages until the end of the eighteenth century, or coincident with the inception of Romanticism. Considered in combination with already developing ideas of nationalism and idealism, certain concepts attributed to Hinduism and Buddhism would foster philosophies in which relationships between human freedom, the role of divinity, the importance of the work of art, transcendence of materiality, and the evolution of the spiritual destiny of human beings – both individually and nationally – would become bizarrely tangled.

Much of this story of confusion and misuse of ideas stems, interestingly enough, from the fact that from early times the concept of infinity – in particular, the idea of "the void," the empty expanse of space out of which the universe may have arisen and may one day return – was an accepted part of Indian thinking. In the foundational civilizations of the West, however, notably ancient Greece, the idea of an infinite nothing (or an infinite something, for that matter) was suspect. For

example, the mathematical expression "zero" did not exist for the Greeks. Zero had been used as a type of placeholder in the mathematics of ancient Babylon, indicating the difference between one and 10, however, it was not until zero made its way to India via trade routes that it became a symbol that would be understood differently from any other mathematical expression – it would be used to designate absence. India was a logical site for the transformation of zero, for early in India's history, the Rig Veda (12th-8th centuries BC), the most ancient work of the Indian religious tradition, stated that the fires of creation arose out of the void at the beginning of this eon of the universe's existence and all things would eventually return to that void at its end.[1]

Such philosophical foundations derived out of a void would not to be found among the Greeks. Aristotle (384-322 BC) distinguishes between physics, which deals with things that are both inseparable from matter and are subject to movement, and metaphysics, which treats that which both exists in separation from matter and is motionless. He concludes in Π ε ρ υ Ο γ ρ α η ο γ [On the Heavens] (c.350 BC) I, 9:

Φανερὸν τοίνυν ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων ὅτι οὔτ᾽ ἔστιν
ἔξω οὔτ᾽ ἐγχωρεῖ γενέσθαι σώματος ὄγκον οὐθενός·
ἐξ ἁπάσης γάρ ἐστι τῆς οἰκείας ὕλης ὁ πᾶς κόσμος
(ὕλη γὰρ ἦν αὐτῷ τὸ φυσικὸν σῶμα καὶ αἰσθητόν),
ὥστ᾽ οὔτε νῦν εἰσὶ πλείους οὐρανοὶ οὔτ᾽ ἐγένοντο,
οὔτ᾽ ἐνδέχεται γενέσθαι πλείους·

(Guthrie 90).[iv] By the same token, Aristotle had no place in his system for infinity in matter, arguing that the infinite of Zeno's paradox existed only in the minds of mathematicians like Zeno. In his Των Μετα Τα Φυσικα Α [Metaphysics] (c.350 BC), Aristotle then uses his argument against infinity (combined with some attributional logic) to prove the necessary existence of divinity. He argues that the existence of at least one unchangeable being, which causes motion while remaining unmoved itself, is shown by the impossibility of an infinite series of existent sources of movement. In Aristotle's reality, the universe is composed of moving spheres that produce the music of the cosmos, each one moving the one before it, until the outermost sphere that contains all others is reached. This sphere is moved by divinity and there is nothing beyond it. Thus, Aristotle's proof of the existence of divinity refutes the idea of infinity. This description of the cosmos,

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[iv] It is plain, then, from what has been said [in his earlier explanation of the heavens], that there is not, nor do the facts allow there to be, any bodily mass beyond the heaven. The world in its entirety is made up of the whole sum of available matter (for the matter appropriate to it is, as we saw, natural perceptible body), and we may conclude that there is not now a plurality of worlds (Guthrie 91).

among Aristotle's other ideas and writings, lived on through the Middle Ages in Islamic scholars' translations and, in modified form, in the Ptolemaic system (which used Aristotle to justify its earth-centered description of the universe), only to be "rediscovered" in Europe in the sixteenth century. In the Middle Ages, however Indian mathematicians such as Bhaskara (12th c.) would argue that dividing a positive number by zero resulted in an infinite quantity, leading them to reverse Aristotle's argument and assert that zero proves the existence of divinity. When the Islamic world encountered zero in trading with Southern Asia over the various "Silk Routes," it would also eventually use the idea of the existence of a void to overturn Neo-Aristotelianism during this same period.

Charles Seife states while there is no evidence that Hindu scholars were interested in Aristotle's system, which was introduced to them in the early fourth century BC by Alexander the Great (Aristotle's most famous pupil), at some point in the Middle Ages they did move from their base-10 number system to the base-60 Babylonian system, which Alexander is thought to have introduced, and which we use today.[2] Our sexigesimal system comes from the Middle East; however, our numerals are not "Arabic," but derived primarily from the Indian Kharosthi and Brahmi scripts, and have been described in the twentieth century with more accuracy as "Hindu-Arabic."[3] Kharosthi numerals are to be found in fourth-century-BC inscriptions in eastern Afghanistan and northern Punjab, and, in combination with

mostly Brahmi numerals, in inscriptions in widely separated parts of India dating from the third-century-BC reign of the Buddhist monarch Asoka. Both Middle Eastern and European Medieval and Renaissance writers, however, already recognized that their numerals were of Hindu origin, as can be seen in works of al-Khowarazmi (c.830), al-Masudi (c.940), al-Biruni (c.1020), Abelhard of Bath (c.1130), Maximus Planudes (c.1330), Willichius (1540), Cataneo (1546), and Wallis (1685).[4]

The creation of the universe out of a void would be just one of the fundamental concepts of Hinduism that incorporate the infinite in ways that proved perplexing for Europeans, since they have neither classical nor Judeo-Christian counterparts. During the Renaissance and Enlightenment, however, and in particular due to the age of naval exploration, unusual terms and concepts now began to make their way into European thought. While the Early German Romantics (c.1800) would not retain an interest in mathematics, and in fact, in the tradition of Reformation Protestants, rejected empirical proofs of divine existence, the Hindu concept of the void, as they would understand it through translations of and commentaries on Sanskrit texts, would prove fascinating and problematic for them. The various Hindu and Buddhist doctrines concerning infinity, transcendence of materiality, and *nirvana* would develop into problematic notions when combined with the Romantic emphasis on subjectivity. In Germany, England, France, and Russia, Romanticism, which in its

first phases can roughly be bracketed by the revolutions of 1789 and 1848, would be so profoundly steeped in South Asian philosophical, cultural, and aesthetic ideas that preoccupation with such ideas would continue well into the twentieth-century.

As is by now generally accepted, Romanticism was an artistic and political reaction, mostly of the young, against stifling social conformism, classicism in the arts, and the rationalism of the Enlightenment.[5] In Germany, Romanticism was a youth-driven movement that advocated a return to the perceived values of the German *Volk*; however, it was not the first such movement in the Germanic lands. During the period of the Protestant Reformation, German Humanism (1450-1550) countered both Catholic and Lutheran orthodoxy by glorifying the pre-Christian, Norse traditions of the early Germanic tribes. A type of national proto-Romanticism emerged during this period, particularly among young students at German universities who argued with their Scholastic masters and emphasized an ideal German man who was young, free, and noble.[6] This Humanism would give way in the following two centuries to the argument that all European peoples were descended from Gothic tribes, and thus were all Germanic peoples. In the Enlightenment period, the archeologist and art historian Joachim Winckelmann would ascribe to the ancient Greeks qualities that the humanists had similarly ascribed to the ancient Goths – nobility, simplicity, liberty, and youth. J. W. von Goethe would follow in Winckelmann's footsteps, and, after an eighteen-month sojourn to Italy spurred by disillusionment with the Gothicism of the

Strum und Drang, would use such ascribed qualities to shape his plays Iphigenie auf Tauris (1787), which celebrates the calm beauty of Greek tragedy, and Torquato Tasso (1790), which idealizes Renaissance Italy, as well as in the poems known as the Römische Elegien [Roman Elegies] (1795). The Neo-classicism that Goethe would help establish, however, would cause the early German Romantics to react against it and return to attributing such characteristics to German sources. In fact, the period of Early German Romanticism – that is, the period of the aftermath of the French and American revolutions – marks the beginnings of regular rebellions of the young in the West, although they were largely unorganized or confined to small groups of thinkers.[7]

Romanticism also, it must be stressed, coincided with the murderously conservative backlash under Robespierre in post-revolutionary France, which begins a period of disappointment for the young across Europe that will last for at least seventy years and feed such rebellions. Thus, Romanticism was both an extension of a young, revolutionary ethos and guided by a sense of disillusionment with the apparent failures of such revolutions. Similarly, the German Youth Movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would be disappointed by the supposed advances of the Industrial Revolution, the results of their long-awaited national unity, as well as many social and economic problems. As George Mosse points out, in Germany, these factors would produce a longing for a more genuine

unity of the *Volk*, and would spur the youth movements of the turn of the twentieth century. "This was the elite of the bourgeois youth, and the Movement was a formative influence for many of the intellectual leaders born between the 1880s and 1920s" (Crisis of German Ideology 6). While the development of National Socialism may have had indirect links with such youth movements, the Nazi movement developed out of this nationalist context and would perpetuate its own fascination with Asian ideas.

The epithet "Aryan," which was so deeply ingrained in Nazi ideology, was first used in the Rig Veda.[8] In Europe, the term was first used by Herodotus and was resurrected by India scholar A. H. Anquetil-Duperron just prior to the birth of Romanticism to designate an original, bellicose people of Northern India who subjugated the tribes of the Indian South. A vision of a unified "Aryan" people persisted at least into the 1930s; however, contemporary scholars now envisage a slow seepage of pastoralists speaking Indo-Aryan languages and believe that there were no such people as "the Aryans," just tribes of ethnically diverse speakers of several related languages who migrated to India from the Levant.[9] Following Anquetil-Duperron, the poet and jurist William Jones announced in 1788 that he had to concede to the existence of strong affinities between Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit. His pronouncement inaugurated the critical linguistic and textual work that would culminate in the use of the term "Indo-European" to describe the family of languages

to which, as is today accepted, both Indian and European languages belong. The currency of this term, however, was itself preceded in the Germanic principalities by the term "*indo-germanische*" (Indo-German), in keeping with the Renaissance argument that all Europeans had descended from earlier Germanic tribes.

In the context of this study, "the Indo-Germans" therefore designates a formidably related line of thinkers for whom India and Germany were profoundly linked by genealogy, culture, philosophy, and religion. The term refers to those figures, either German themselves or sympathetic to Germanic culture, who embraced to varying degrees and for various purposes "Indian ideas" – that is, concepts or motifs that they claimed to locate in the art, architecture, literature, religions, and history of India. Most especially, these "Indo-Germans" will here be considered, for the most part chronologically, as J. G. Herder, Novalis, F. W. J. Schelling, Friedrich Schlegel, and Arthur Schopenhauer, as well as a "supporting" cast of Indo-Germans, some of whom assume more adversarial positions to the German fascination with India, among them Immanuel Kant, Goethe, G. W. F. Hegel, and Friedrich Nietzsche. While the wider context of Indo-German ideas extends from circa 303 BC to the present day, it is the period of *Frühromantik* [Early (German) Romanticism] (1796-1808) that will be of utmost concern, for this era sees the most profound and intense influence of the study of India, or "Indology," in France, England, and Germany, particularly in the work of Novalis, Schelling, and Schlegel. Bracketing this period,

and of comparable importance, are the Indian-influenced works of Herder and Schopenhauer.

The development of Indo-German ideas involves several overlapping spheres of interest: mythology, religion, philosophy, anthropology, art history, aesthetics, literature, and politics. This study will thus be organized around a number of different areas of inquiry. Culturally, the thinkers involved tended to juxtapose Gothic-Germanic culture with both Latinate culture (Greco-Roman, as well as French and German Neo-classical) and Indian (Hindu) culture. Between the Latins and Indians lay Persian culture, which would exercise particular appeal to Anquetil-Duperron, Goethe, Hegel, and, one could argue, Nietzsche. The majority of ideas about India from Roman times through the Enlightenment come mostly from travelers' observations of Indian sculpture and architecture, therefore art historiography plays a major role in the construction of European images of India. These art historical images would later be bound up in larger conceptions of global history and nationalism in the works of Friedrich Creuzer and Hegel. In the area of linguistics, the discovery and study of the Indo-European language family would foster the emergence of several sub-categories that would come to make up many of the modern areas of linguistics, such as the comparative, historical, and typological linguistics of Franz Bopp, Jacob Grimm, and Wilhelm von Humboldt. Philosophically, this history of ideas concerns the intersection of issues concerning

human freedom, perfection, and enlightenment (in a universe with or without a personal god), particularly in German idealism. With regard to nationalism and nationality, this study will trace the particular use of supposed "Aryan" origins for purposes of establishing national and cultural identities as well as discriminations of several sorts on racial and linguistic grounds.

Prior to the "Orientalism" craze of the 1980s and '90s, with its concomitant fear of political correctness, a large body of scholarship had already been produced concerning colonialism, exploitation of the Third World by the First World, and multiple cross currents of misappropriation, of use and abuse. In the area of Indian-European intellectual relations, seminal works related to this study would have to include those by Raymond Schwab and Léon Poliakov. It must be noted, however, that those works have tended to ascribe to the thinkers concerned more certainty about their opinions of Indian thought than I am willing to concede. Schwab and Poliakov have also, like Edward Said and Martin Bernal, tended to connect European intellectual relations with Asia to exploitation and anti-Semitism rather directly – as one-sided histories of oppression, rather than complexes of exchange. Therefore, Dorothy M. Figueira's and Edwin Bryant's balanced and thoroughly researched studies of the relationships between the Aryan myth, Indian literature, and German thinkers have proven more profoundly useful for this work.

It must be noted that this study treats only tangentially the role of ideas about Judaism and Semitic races that are clearly interlinked with the development of Indo-German ideas. Closer explorations of such connections may be found in George Mosse, Steven A. Aschheim, and Terry Pinkard's work on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century German intellectual history. Their work has proven useful to this study, which attempts to demonstrate the extent to which the misuse of Indian ideas does play a vital – if at times apparently oblique – role in the intellectual history that lead to genocide under the Nazi regime, based on the internal principle that while these thinkers strove to find edifying experiences that lay outside their own milieux, they were ultimately hampered by their prior prejudices. Of similar import for this study are Michael Allen Gillespie, Paul Oppenheimer, and Stella Kramisch's work on nihilism, the demonic, and the element of destruction in Hinduism. Their scholarship has aided my attempts to discuss certain influential literary, philosophical, and historical works that indicate dark turning points in this intellectual development, concentrating on the contexts in which these works were issued and on textual exegesis. On the role of images of India in Western art and the history of Western attempts to infiltrate India, I must acknowledge the work of Partha Mitter, Charles Allen, and Joan-Pau Rubiés. Finally, Romila Thapar, Sumit Sarkar, and Anatol Lieven's scholarship on nationalism as a spiritual problem has helped to provide a framework for the end of this study.

All translations from Latin, French, Italian, and Russian are mine, as well as selected German translations unless noted otherwise. Quotations in ancient Greek have been provided in the original with English translations; however, my command of Sanskrit is not sufficient to provide Sanskrit quotations in the original. Transliterations have thus been furnished for quotations from the Rig Veda, Bhagavad-Gita, and Gitagovinda, but not for Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam, since my research shows, astonishingly, that an English transliteration of that text is not to be found in any library in the United States.

"Genesis on the Ganges," or Chapter 1, provides the background to the Romantic fascination with India, from the Romans to the Enlightenment. Its first section concentrates on the development of the Shaivic and Vaishnavic ideals associated with Pythagoras, Plato, Dionysus, Heracles, Zoroaster, and Gautama Buddha[10] in the works of the classical historians Herodotus, Megasthenes, Ctesias, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Polyaenus, Arrian, Philostratus, and Tacitus. The second section of the chapter concerns the medieval accounts of travel to India by figures such as Marco Polo and Ludovico di Varthema and the early "German nationalist" ideas of Reformation theologians such as Martin Luther and the Eberlin von Gunzberg. Section three concerns ideas of subjectivity, genealogy, and aesthetics in the works of Enlightenment thinkers Descartes, Bailly, Voltaire, Buffon, Winckelmann, and Kant.

Chapter 2, "Ominous Overtures," presents the three primary influences on the Early German Romantics in the twenty or so years prior to the group's formation in Jena in 1796. Taken up first are various works of the *Sturm und Drang*, in particular Goethe's Die Leiden des jungen Werthers (1774), Schiller's Über den Zusammendhang der tierischen Natur des Menschen mit seiner geistigen (1780), and Herder's Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit (1784-91). This section also considers ideas about "youth rebellion," the place of Germany in global intellectual history, and the role of the work of art. A second section of this chapter treats the subjectivism, which some term "nihilism," found in the early versions of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*, while a third concerns the translations of and commentaries on Zend and Sanskrit texts by French and English scholars, such as Anquetil-Duperron and Jones, beginning in the 1770s.

"Fear of Infinity," or Chapter 3, addresses the works of the Early German Romantics – Novalis, Schelling, and Schlegel – in relation to the newly translated Sanskrit works to which they responded so strongly. Novalis' Hymnen an die Nacht (1799-1800) is read alongside Kalidasa's Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam (c.5th century AD) in section one. Schelling's Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur (1797) and System des transcendentalen Idealismus (1800) are viewed in light of his fascination with Jayadeva's Gitagovinda (12th century) in section two. In the third section, the ideas of Friedrich Schlegel's Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier (1808) are

taken up in juxtaposition to ideas of degeneration and spiritual integration in the Bhagavad-Gita (5th-2nd centuries BC) and Puranas (c.6th century BC).

Chapter 4, "Goals without Gods," concerns reactions to many of the themes and ideas of the Jena group, beginning with the place of India, its history, and its art in Hegel's Philosophie der Geschichte (1816-31) and Ästetik (1816-31). A second section here concerns the last of the true "Indo-Germans": Schopenhauer. His Der Welt als Wille und Vorstellung (1818, 1844) and Parerga und Paralipomena (1851) are read in relation to the Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita, and Buddhist texts of the Pali canon. A final section concentrates on Friedrich Nietzsche's "Dionysian" naturalist epistemology in texts such as Die Geburt der Tragödie (1872) and Also Sprach Zarathustra (1883-85), as well as the posthumous misappropriation of Nietzschean ideas.

The contention of this study is that much of the impetus behind nineteenth-century ideas of pessimism and nihilism lies in types of "inspiration" drawn from Hindu and Buddhist texts, and their use in connection with existing European philosophical ideas. This stream of thought in the West begins at least with Descartes' *cogito*, if not over two millennia earlier in Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" in Π ο λ ι τ ε ι α [Republic] (360 BC). It also provides much of the spiritual and ethical underpinnings of early German nationalism. As may already seem clear, moreover, the Indo-German odyssey spans more than two millenia and bears on the

twentieth-century history of Europe in ways that are perhaps more profound than any other so-called "orientalist" history, despite the fact that Germany, unlike England or France, was never much of a colonial power. The story of the Indo-Germans thus lies at the core of Western conceptions of racial and religious origins, aesthetics and the role of the work of art in modern life, pessimism and nihilism, and human freedom and perfection. Now that Europe has entered what one might term a "post-national" phase of supposed international cooperation, perhaps the story of the Indo-Germans will help shed light on how it was that European nations themselves may have arisen out of the void and may return to it.

Chapter 1

GENESIS ON THE GANGES

"La quale avvenne in una maniera miracolosa, onde allo istante si formarono tante favelle diverse. Per la qual confusione di lingue vogliono i Padri che si venne tratto tratto a perdere la purità della lingua santa avanti-diluviana."[v]

– Giambattista Vico, La scienza nuova (1725)

I

Dionysus in the Land of Demons

More than five centuries prior to the Germanic tribes' invasions of Southern Europe, before the establishment of the Roman republic and empire, Alexander the Great made it to Punjab, in 324 BC. The man who began his military career as king of Macedonia, which looked to Greece for its culture, managed to establish an empire that extended, north to south, from Thrace to Egypt and from his Western homeland east to just beyond the Indus River. He was thus the first ruler to link east and west, Europe with Asia. As such, he was the progenitor of Hellenistic civilization – itself a mixture of Greek, Persian, Egyptian, and Indian influences. But, for all this, Alexander was unable to extend his empire far into India, something that he and his near successors longed to accomplish, for the civilization of the Ganges River Valley

[v] It happened in a miraculous way, so that in an instant many different languages were formed. The Fathers would have it that through this confusion of tongues little by little the purity of the sacred antediluvian language was lost.

already appeared to have a culture rich in material goods and knowledge. After Alexander's death, one of his viceroys, Seleucus Nikator, attempted to extend the emperor's reach into the Ganges Plain, first, uselessly, by using military force, then by diplomacy. In 302 BC, he sent an ambassador, Megasthenes (c.340-282 BC), to the court of Chandragupta Maurya, the king of Magadha, in what is now the modern Indian state of Bihar. Chandragupta was the founder of the Maurya dynasty, which would go on to rule an empire, from the Hindu Kush Mountains in the northwest to the Bay of Bengal in the southwest, for nearly a century and a half. Fourteen years after his departure from Magadha, Megasthenes returned to Greece to write the Indica (288 BC), an account of the time he had spent at the court of Chandragupta (who he rendered in Greek as "Sandrokottos"), in the city of Palimbothra (or Pataliputra, now Patna) on the Ganges. While Chandragupta's court hosted many foreign ambassadors impressed with its ornately carved palace and well-run empire, the Indica is the first account of a European in India and it initiated what was to become, for over two millennia, a Western fascination with Indian culture and ideas.

While Megasthenes' Indica has been lost, classical historians such as Diodorus Siculus (c.90-c.20 BC), Strabo (58-c.25 BC), Polyaenus (2nd c. AD), Arrian (AD c.96-180), and Philostratus (AD 171?-247?) incorporated fragments of it into their own writings, and earlier works by Herodotus (484-c.425 BC) and the Persian Ctesias (fl. 400 BC) that echoed similar ideas about India would influence the work of Pliny the Elder (AD 23-79) and Solinus (fl. AD 250). J. W. McCrindle, who has

compiled the remaining fragments of Megasthenes and his successors, notes that Megasthenes was the first European author to speak of the wisdom and exemplary morality of the Brahmans.[1] Megasthenes, and those who were later to pass on and elaborate the fragments of his work that have survived, would establish and perpetuate the notion in Western minds that two of the earliest and most important European philosophers, Pythagoras (582-500 BC) and Plato (427-347 BC), had amazingly gone to the Brahmin priests of India for instruction.

The influence of Megasthenes was succeeded by that of Philostratus, who notes in his biography of the Pythagorean teacher Apollonius of Tyana (fl. AD 220) that Pythagoras and Plato's belief in the transcendental nature of the soul, or in metempsychosis (that the souls of animals traveled into the bodies of other animals after death) – the reason for Pythagoras's vegetarianism – had been anticipated by the Brahmins of India.[2]

"Καίτοι τραγῳδίας μὲν εὖ κεκοσμημένης ὀλίγη χάρις, εὐφραίνει γὰρ ἐν σμικρῷ τῆς ἡμέρας, ὥσπερ ἡ τῶν Διονυσίων ὥρα, φιλοσοφίας δὲ ξυγκειμένης μέν, ὡς Πυθαγόρας ἐδικαίωσεν, ὑποθειαζούσης δέ, ὡς πρὸ Πυθαγόρου Ἰνδοί, οὐκ ἐς βραχὺν χρόνον ἡ χάρις, ἀλλ' ἐς ἄπειρόν τε καὶ ἀριθμοῦ πλείω. [vi]

[vi] A well-produced tragedy gets little gratitude, since it pleases only for a small part of a day, like the season of the Dionysia. But when philosophy is constituted in the way Pythagoras ordained, and is divinely inspired in the way the Indians ordained before

Philostratus is thus the first writer to lead Renaissance and Enlightenment thinkers to trace Pythagoreanism to Hinduism. The parallel drawn between Pythagoras and Plato's mistrust of materiality and that of the Hindus will prove more profound for German idealists, who will equate Plato's "Forms" (or "Ideas") both with concepts such as the existence of *Brahman*, as found in both Vedantan and post-Vedic Indian philosophy, and with Kant's "*Ding an sich*" ("thing-in-itself").[3]

Several classical European authors even believed that such "Hindu" ideas as metempsychosis had been brought back to Europe by the Greek gods themselves. Dionysus, the Greek god of wine and mystical ecstasy, whom the Romans called Bacchus, was purported to have journeyed to India, subdued the Aryan and Dravidian peoples, absorbed their philosophies, and returned to Europe with their chief ideas. Euripides describes Dionysus in Βακκαι [Bacchae] (406 BC) as a provider of knowledge and the conqueror of Arabia, Persia, and Bactria. Martin Nilsson postulates, however, that the story of Dionysus's campaign that conquered India and leads him to appropriate the learning of the Brahmin priests was invented in emulation of Alexander's attempted infiltration into the region over a century after Euripedes' composition ofBacchae .[4] Arrian notes in his own Indica (fl. AD 120), book VII of his life of Alexander, that Dionysus went to India, conquered the tribes there, founded cities and gave them laws, introduced the use of wine among the Indians, as he had done among the Greeks, and taught them to sow the land,

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Pythagoras, then the gratitude lasts not for a short time, but for a time beyond number and infinite (Jones 131).

supplying seed for the purpose himself.[5] Arrian thus credits Dionysus with, among other things, introducing agriculture into Asia. He adds that the Indians, although they worshipped other gods, then began to worship Dionysus. Polyaenus goes so far as to state that Dionysus got the Indians drunk before attacking them and used baccantic orgies as part of his military strategy for subjugating all of the Asian continent.[6]

What is of more lasting importance about the legend of Dionysus's supposed journey to India is that it led to a series of identifications of him with two of the three deities in the Hindu *Trimurti*,[7] an absurdity that persisted even into the twentieth century. The legend thus promoted the classical affiliation of Dionysus with Shiva, the Hindu god associated with destruction, and occasionally with Vishnu, the Hindu god who maintains the equilibrium of the universe. (Brahma retained few devotees in India even in this period.) Classical authors would also postulate affiliations between Shiva and Heracles on one hand, and Krishna and Prometheus on the other.[8] Diodorus Siculus argues that the Greek hero Heracles founded the city of "Palibothra" where Megasthenes had been ambassador.[9] Allan Dahlquist notes, in another tradition from that which envisions Dionysus as conqueror of India both Dionysus and Heracles have their origins among the Indians,[10] as is evident in Arrian, who states that Heracles was a native of India and that from the time of Dionysus to Sandrokottos the Indians counted 153 kings, as well as 6451 years until the arrival of Alexander the Great.[11] Both Strabo and Arrian state that Alexander's followers

claimed to have found, near the source of the Indus River, the prison of Prometheus.[12] It is important to note, however, as does Dahlquist, that there is no Indian tradition according to which an invasion by Shiva and his worshippers is so much so mentioned.[13]

The observation that such ancient writers did make the identification between Dionysus and Shiva has nevertheless won the almost unanimous approval of scholars (despite the fact that the parallel is not explicitly drawn in classical texts) because of the many similarities between the cult of Dionysus and that of Shaivic devotees.[14] As Dahlquist painstakingly lists, there are major differences between the two, most notably, that Shiva is usually depicted as a demonic destroyer and Dionysus is always depicted as benevolent.[15] Both, however, are said to cure the sick and to have provided the Indians with weapons; both are associated with plowing, with figs and vineyards, with mountains, and with dancing; both are depicted as having long, bushy hair, and carrying a spear or trident. At the end of his study of correspondences in the classical and Sanskrit texts, however, Dahlquist finds, ironically, that "Dionysus has no contact whatever with the Aryan world of ideas" (Dahlquist 279), but that he can be connected at a number of points with non-Hindu Dravidian religion. He finds instead that Dionysus corresponds more strongly to depictions of the beneficent Krishna. Thus, while Megasthenes himself describes Dionysus as Shiva and Heracles as Krishna, there is debate among scholars over the extent to which the gods resemble each other in his surviving fragments.[16] Such criticism was already present in Roman

commentaries on early texts devoted to the topic of India. Strabo is critical of other writers' accounts of India, its ideas, and religions:

> Δεῖ δ' εὐγνωμόνως ἀκούειν περὶ αὐτῆς· καὶ γὰρ ἀπωτάτω ἐστί, καὶ οὐ πολλοὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων κατώπτευσαν αὐτήν· οἱ δὲ καὶ ἰδόντες μέρη τινὰ εἶδον, τὰ δὲ πλείω λέγουσιν ἐξ ἀκοῆς· καὶ ἃ εἶδον δέ, ἐν παρόδῳ στρατιωτικῇ καὶ δρόμῳ κατέμαθον·[vii]

Nevertheless, the impact of Megasthenes on Roman historians is not to be underestimated, as the body of scholarship on his influence indicates.[17]

The identification of Hindu gods with Hellenic ones would set the precedent for Germanic scholars from the Renaissance onward to identify Hindu deities with classical deities and heroes, as well as with both Judeo-Christian figures and old Norse gods. Of similar importance for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is the Late Enlightenment use of the term "Aryan" to denote the first culture to emerge after the Biblical Flood. The first European to refer to the peoples who migrated from the Hindu Kush into what is now Pakistan and North-Western India as "Aryans" was apparently Herodotus, using as his root *arya*, the Sanskrit word meaning "noble." Herodotus states, in Ι σ τ ο ρ ι α ι [The History] (c.425 BC), that the name "Aryan" was the ancient name of the people of the kingdom of Media or Medes.

[vii] It is necessary for us to hear accounts of this country with indulgence, for not only is it farthest away from us, but not many of our people have seen it; and even those who have seen it have seen only parts of it, and the greater part of what they say is hearsay; and even what they saw they learned on a hasty passage with an army through the country (Jones 3).

Godley notes that beginning even in the time of Strabo the name "Aryan" was given much wider extension, as was the attribution of strong and noble characteristics to the Aryans, for Herodotus depicts them suffering in climatically harsh India, the most remote and fantastical place on Earth.[18] He writes that India is the nation that lies farthest to the East and that beyond it lays desert, a wasteland of giant ants but abundant gold.[19]

Herodotus writes nothing about Indian deities but establishes the possibility of an intermediary figure between Shiva and Dionysus: the Egyptian god of the dead, Osiris. He states that Dionysus is called Osiris in Egypt, that he is believed to rule the underworld, that he is the only deity, other than Isis, who is worshipped throughout Egypt, and that Osiris's son, Horus, is Apollo.[20] Herodotus then goes on to explain that the concept of metempsychosis originates with the Egyptians:

> πρῶτοι δὲ καὶ τόνδε τὸν λόγον Αἰγύπτιοι εἰσὶ οἱ εἰπόντες, ὡς ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴ ἀθάνατός ἐστί, τοῦ σώματος δὲ καταφθίνοντος ἐς ἄλλο ζῷον αἰεὶ γινόμενον ἐσδύεται, ἐπεὰν δὲ πάντα περιέλθῃ τὰ χερσαῖα καὶ τὰ θαλάσσια καὶ τὰ πετεινά, αὖτις ἐς ἀνθρώπου σῶμα γινόμενον ἐσδύνει· τὴν περιή-λυσιν δὲ αὐτῇ γίνεσθαι ἐν τρισχιλίοισι ἔτεσι.[viii]

[viii] The Egyptians were the first to teach that the human soul is immortal, and at the death of the body enters into some other living thing then coming to birth; and after passing through all creatures of land, sea, and air (which cycle it completes in three thousand years) it enters once more into a human body at birth. Some of the Greeks, early and late, have used this doctrine as if it were their own; I know their names, but do not here record them (ibid. 123).

While Herodotus thought more highly of Egypt than of India, such attributions of concepts, together with this syncretism of divinities, would continue well into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when thinkers would similarly combine Greco-Roman, Norse, Christian, Zoroastrian, Hindu, and Buddhist divinities and ideas.

The collapse of the Roman Empire, however, would bring about an interruption of contacts between Europe and India, with tales of India by classical authors resurfacing only in the early Middle Ages, before Muslim accounts of Southern Asia began to filter into Europe. Partha Mitter notes that a particularly influential eighth-century English text, Marvels of the East, described, among other wonders, the Indian monsters drawn from classical sources through Pliny, Solinus, and pseudo-Callisthenes.[21] Multi-limbed Hindu gods with animal body parts, such as Ganesha – the god of wisdom, who has four arms and an elephant's head – seem to have represented demons or monsters to most medieval European scholars. Joan-Pau Rubiés, however, admonishes against subscribing to the notion that the medieval European view of India as a land of marvels reflects something fundamentally idealistic about the medieval mentality.[22] While medieval views of India were not monolithic, and especially not among travelers who had seen India's tremendous variety of religions, cultures, and geographical features, as both Rubiés and Mitter point out, a bias against the Brahmins for their supposed idolatry was promoted in illustrations of India produced by Europeans who had no first-hand experience of the subcontinent. With the Age of Exploration (1450-1600), however, travelers were

stimulated by an ancient, more positive, reputation of the Brahmins, and, in particular, the idea that Pythagoras had inherited his belief in metempsychosis from the Hindus.

Il Milione (1298), the account of Marco Polo's (1254-1323?) 24 years in Asia, which he dictated to his companion in the prison at Genoa, Rustichello of Pisa, is remembered mostly as a report on the status of the Mongol Empire of Kublai Khan. Polo's, however, was the first medieval European book to describe the practices and beliefs of Indian religions and extended classical images of fantastic India with which Polo was unlikely to have been familiar.[23] In chapter 170, Polo describes how in Gujarat "si conciano molte cuoia di becco e di bue e d'unicorni e d'altre bestie, e fassine grandi mercatantie e forniscosene molte contrade" (Polo 263).[ix] It is in chapter 157 on the idols of "Zipangu" (Japan, which Polo appears to consider to be a part of India), however, that deities are associated with devils:

> Or sapiate che gl'idoli di queste isole [Zipangu] e quelle del Catai sono tutte d'una maniera. E questi di queste isole, e ancora de l'altre ch'ànno idoli, ta; sono ch'ànno capo di bue, e tal di porco, e così di molte fazioni di bestie, di proci, di montoni e altri; e tali ànno un capo e .iiij. bisi e tali ànno .iiij. capi e e quanti più n'ànno, magiore speranza e fede ànno i·lloro. Gli fatti di quest'idoli son sì diversi e di tante diversità di diavoli, che qui non si vuole

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[ix] Many skins of goat, oxen, rhinoceros, and other beasts are dressed, and large merchant vessels will furnish many cities with them. (It should be noted that *unicorni* (rhinoceros) has been rendered as "unicorns" in some translations.)

contare (ibid. 220).[x]

In the section on the island of "Seilla" (Ceylon), Polo recounts the story of Gautama Buddha, but states that he was thought in that area to be the first man, and thus Polo calls him "Adam." According to Polo, the Great Khan sent ambassadors to Ceylon to return with the teeth and cranium (Polo uses the word *scodella* or "bowl") of this "Adam." Apparently, the teeth were quite large. While seemingly impressed by the story of Gautama Buddha, when comparing Buddhism and Hinduism to the Christian communities he encounters in India, Polo does not hold them in high regard because he felt, like most of the Portuguese travelers of the High Middle Ages, that they sanctioned idolatry. He states of several kingdoms of the south of India: "Qui si à re e sono gente idolatri; e' non fanno trebuto a veruna altra persona" (ibid. 260).[xi] Charles Allen writes that

> [Polo's] years of service at the court of Kublai Khan allowed him to observe at close quarters the Tibetan lamas whose teachings had by then been adopted by the Mongols as their state religion. The only thing about these lamas that impressed him [for Polo considered any non-Christian, Jew, or "Saracen"

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[x] Now it should be known that the idols of this island [Zipangu] and those of the Catai are all of the same kind. Those of this island, and of the others that have idols, have the head of an ox, or a pig, or of many other kinds of beasts: raccoons, sheep and others. Some have a head and three faces, some three heads, and some ten. And the more heads they have the more one can place one's hopes in them. The aspects of these idols are so differnet and from such a diversity of devils, that one cannot even count them.

[xi] Here they have a king and are idolatrous; and they do not pay tribute to any other person.

> (Muslim) an idolater] was their fearsome reputation as sorcerers, although he noted that Kublai Khan revered a prophet named Sakyamuni Burkhan,[24] whom he regarded as on a par with Moses, Jesus Christ and Mohammed (Allen 27).

While travelers in the Middle Ages may or may not have been acquainted with the Indian monsters of popular late-antique handbooks, such as that of Solinus, it seems Mitter, and J. Baltrusaitis before him, are correct in asserting that Polo's description of South Asian idols was primarily responsible for the reappearance of many-armed monsters in Western literature and art. By the time of Il Milione's publication, the devil had been depicted in Christian iconography with horns, hooves, and a tail for at least three or four centuries.[25] Le livre des merveilles du monde, the most celebrated edition of Polo's work (circa 1400), assigned, for the first time, a horned goat-head to an Indian deity. Baltrusaitis notes that in Thomas de Cantimpré's De Naturis Rerum (c.1250), in Megenberg's translation of Cantimpré Buch der Natur (1475), in Willem's Low German Hystorie van Regnaert die Vos (1479), and in the Nuremberger Chronik (1493), the many-armed idols assumed to exist in India were consigned to a category of demons.[26] Ludovico di Varthema's Itinerario (1510), composed after the Bolognese traveler spent five years in India, also "created an unambiguous stimulus for the bias of the illustrators when they described the gods in Indian temples as traditional European devils" (Rubiés 37).[27]

The classical view of India as the land of knowledge and the medieval view of Hindu deities as devils is indicative of the contradictory nature of early modern Europe's relation to the subcontinent and its religions. India thus comes to be seen by medieval and later Europeans as a land in which tremendous knowledge is guarded by dark and sinister forces. It is thought of as a place where human experience can be transcended either through embracing compassion and moderation or through falling into excess and destruction. The figure of Shiva embodies this paradox, for Shiva is thought of in Hinduism itself as both benevolent and terrible. Shiva's reputation is that of the demonic destroyer. While Shiva is the necessary negative in a tripartite description of the universe, however, this god is also described as the destroyer of ignorance. Like Prometheus bringing the fire of knowledge to human beings, according to the Rig Veda, Shiva in an earlier form, as Agni, "the fire," brought to life the progeny of Brahma, "the benevolent host of immaculate Fire-youths" (Rig Veda 1.71.5, 8). Stella Kramrisch points out that Shiva "has two natures or two 'names' [although there are several versions of each of these two "names"]: the one, cruel and wild (*rudra*), the other kind (*shiva*) and tranquil (*shanta*)" (Kramrisch 7). As Rudra, he unleashes terrible destruction; as Shiva he heals the wounds of those whom he has injured.[28]

In the influential Samkhya system of philosophy, attributed to the fourth-century-AD Hindu philosopher Kapila, the universe is divided into *prakrti* (nature or matter) and *purusha* (soul or consciousness), not dissimilar from Aristotle's

distinction between physics and metaphysics. *Praktri* is divided into three *gunas* or qualities, each of which has a potentiality or tendency of its own: *sattva* is seen as ascending and luminous, *tamas* descending and dark, *rajas* as twirling and red.[29] *Rajasic*, *sattvic*, and *tamasic* are the three fundamental attributes that represent in Hindu thought the natural evolutionary process through which the subtle becomes gross. Gross objects, in turn, by action and interaction among themselves, may again become subtle. The three *gunas*, thus are defined as: *sattva* = essence (subtle), which is associated with Vishnu; *rajas* = activity, associated with Brahma; and *tamas* = inertia (gross), which is associated with Shiva.[30] Shiva is thus associated with darkness leading the descent from pre-matter into matter, which is viewed in this context as a process of disintegration. Disintegration of the cosmos, however, prefigures reintegration into the integrity of the "Uncreate." The Svestasvatara Upanishad thus presents Shiva as Lord of the manifested world, mediated by the five senses, which lead to the various kinds of pain (ibid. 80-83).[31]

These various aspects of Shiva were in no way understood in Europe, however, for Europeans would not read texts such as the Rig Veda or the Upanishads until the eighteenth century and therefore Western historiography had yet to take into account such texts, much less the proper contexts in which they were composed.

> The India made famous by seventeenth-century European travelers and which occupied an increasingly prominent space in the exotic imagination of the Enlightenment was essentially the India of the Muslim-dominated Mughal

> empire, with its syncretic court splendor and treacherous imperial politics set against the background of a brahmin-dominated society of naked ascetics, idolatrous temples and inflexible caste rules (Rubiés 1).

Rubiés argues, one of the primary reasons why the Indians were made to play such a negative role in the first clearly formulated Renaissance interpretations of Asian peoples is that European Catholics, particularly Portuguese Jesuits, were frustrated in their attempts to evangelize the Hindus in their hope of taking control over Asiatic trade routes from Muslim merchant communities of the Mughal Empire.[32] The intractability of the Brahmins appeared in sharp contrast to the learned Buddhists of Ming China and Japan, among whom the Jesuits found not insubstantial numbers of converts, despite the evangelists' inability to penetrate deep into those countries geographically. Such intractability was due to "a negative judgment of Indian civility based on apparent dissimilarities with Europe, legitimized by the immediate applicability of the concept of idolatry, and compounded by decades of missionary frustration" (ibid. 10).

What is fascinating about conceptions of India during the Age of Exploration is that the political imagination of Hindu southern India itself had been fired by the idea of a mythical dharmic kingdom, after the last Indian imperial kingdom, the Vijayanagara, collapsed in the sixteenth century, leaving India with no political center.[33] Thus, as the number of European visitors to India proliferated, particularly due to the contacts of the Dutch and British East India companies, the South India

that such travelers encountered lay in political disorder while to some degree harboring its own romantic image of a spiritually unified past. Southern India's image of its own past began to be taken into account, however, only as both Counter-Reformation missionaries and secular humanists began to challenge the convention of describing behavior without analyzing beliefs, a practice that had dominated travel literature and historiography since the Middle Ages.[34]

Beyond these literary efforts, India's prestige, and more particularly that of her Brahmin priests, was on the rise, for the priestly class was still considered by many continental Europeans to have been the guardian of Indian knowledge since the time of the Flood. Along these lines, the English, with whom we so readily now associate India, were in fact latecomers to the Indian fascination, but by 1665 Sir Edward Bysshe (1615-1679) had collected in one volume the classical sayings of the "Brachmans," in De Gentibus Indiae. He claimed that the wisdom of the Brahmins was directly linked to that of classical sages. Bysshe was one of many secular thinkers of this period who began to associate non-Christian traditions, such as Greco-Roman classicism, with India. In reaction to such associations, Christian scholars began to attack Hinduism and Buddhism, at the time very poorly understood and often lumped together under the term "Lamaism." German Jesuit scholar Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680), for example, denounced Lamaism as a perversion of the Roman Catholic Church's sacred rites. Anti-Catholic polemicists, however, used the denunciation of Lamaism as a critique of Catholicism by emphasizing the

surprising conformity between Lamaism and the religion of Rome.[35] As Allen has noted, what all the missionary-explorers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries remarked upon, with varying degrees of shock and disquiet, was the disturbing similarity between the rituals and trappings of the Church of Rome and those practiced throughout Tibet and Mongolia, although these parallels are really only superficial. What is more shocking in this period is the association of Hindu and Buddhist ideas with another non-Christian belief system: Norse mythology. This association brings us back to the role of the Goths in the European imagination.

II

The Medieval Search for Germanic Origins

From the decline of the western Roman Empire to the late Middle Ages, Christian theologians followed Roman historians in endowing the word "Goth" with tremendous power, thus revealing their fear of the Germanic tribes. Léon Poliakov notes that Augustine's mentor in Rome, St. Ambrose, cursed them, likening them to the dreadful giant sons of Japheth – Gog and Magog – mentioned in the Old Testament.[36] While St.Augustine himself saw them as an instrument of Divine Providence, Salvius in France juxtaposed their simplicity and vitality with the decadence of the jaded Romans.[37] Such examples point to the tremendous impression made on contemporaries in the classical world by the Germanic rulers who would take over much of the western portion of the Roman Empire, and indeed, the idea of a

noble German simplicity as opposed to a Latinate decadence that persisted into the early twentieth century is rooted in early conceptions of the Goths. Unsurprisingly, in Latin languages the spread of Germanic tribes is called an invasion of barbarians – *les invasions barbares* in French, *gli invasioni dei barbari* in Italian, and *las invasiőes de los bárbaros* in Spanish – stemming etymologically from the Greek idea that anyone living outside of Athens (and, by extension, one might argue, the classical world) was a "barbarian." Also understandable is the fact that the modern German language terms the same movement of these tribes "migrations of peoples" (*Völkerwanderungen*). The spread of these ancient tribes was understood as migrations rather than invasions because some, such as the Lutheran propagandist Eberlin von Gunzberg (b. c.1470), considered all western Europeans to be descended from earlier, superior Germanic tribes. The Saxons were felt to have settled England, the Franks France, the Lombards Northern Italy, and the Ostrogoths Spain – which is to say that all Europeans were really "Germans," according to the early "nationalists" of the Reformation era.

This sense of the superiority of German stock would persist into the Enlightenment both in the Germanic states and in other European lands. The Scottish skeptic philosopher David Hume (1711-1776) notes in "On National Characters" (1742), for instance, that while "all the nations which live beyond the polar circles or between the tropics are inferior to the rest of the species, […] the most rude and barbarous of the whites, the ancient Germans… have something eminent about

them."[38] Similarly, in a number of passages in Esprit des Lois (c.1740), Charles de Montesquieu (1689-1755) describes the ancient Germans as the forebears of the French, an idea that upset many of Montesquieu's contemporaries in France. Poliakov notes that even into the twentieth century "les mots clés de l'histoire politique française semblent sournoisement suggérer la supériorité germanique tant sur les Latins que sur les Slaves" (ibid.).[xii]

Some have also argued that a "Germanic spirit" informed the development of the adjectives describing the Germans in their own dialects. Leo Weisgerber observes that while most names in European languages are etymologically derived from those of countries and peoples, such as *français* from *Franks*, the vernacular terms *theodiscus* and *diutisk* – which refers to Germanic peoples and appears around the time of Charlemagne (742-814), a century or so before the general name *tütsche* or *Deutsche* came into use – are indicative of the importance of a peculiar cultural and spiritual *Geist*, a German spirit, among even the earliest Germanic tribes.[39] This, according to Weisgerber, is to say that German history manifested from its beginnings the recognition of an endemic spiritual principle that proved far more influential than any rules of geographical placement. The words for Germans in modern English, however, come from Roman politicians and historians, who used the term *Germanus* to describe the Goths. In fact, the surname *Germanicus* had been given to Emperor Augustus's son-in-law Tiberius Drusus and his son, the emperor

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[xii] The key words of French political history seem to slyly suggest the superiority of the German stock as much over the Latins as over the Slavs.

Domitian, to commemorate victories in Germany, centuries before the German "migrations."[40] It would not be until after the reign of Charlemagne, however, that Germanic peoples themselves would come to believe that a unified German kingdom had in any way been founded when, in 962, Pope John XII formed the Holy Roman Empire by crowning King Otto I "Emperor of the Romans." Otto had been Duke of Saxony and had become king of the central region of Charlemagne's empire in Northern Italy when the emperor's sons carved up the area in 936. This was the first post-Roman Central European empire, or the first German empire. The establishment of such an "empire" and a seemingly glorious future, however, could not provide the Germans with a less nebulous past. While pre-Christian Germanic groups may have relied on mythologies surrounding fantastic tales of Wotan and the Valkyries, by this point the various German peoples had converted to Christianity and they increasingly sought to establish how they were connected to the men who emerged after the flood described in Genesis. What genealogy led from Noah to Otto I? And how did the German language arise out of the "confounding" of the original language, when the descendants of Noah built a tower in defiance of God (Genesis 11:1-8)?

Despite a general interest in Asia, scholars in the Late Middle Ages were thus more concerned with where the descendants of Noah and their own languages came from than whether demons were worshipped in India, a place to which most Westerners would never travel. Christian Western and Central Europeans in the Middle Ages – as they increasingly came into contact with Slavic peoples, as well as

both Christians and Muslims from the Eastern and Southern rims of the Mediterranean – began to postulate that their origins might lie to the east of Europe. The Bible itself suggested that the origin of mankind might be discovered somewhere to the east of Judea (Genesis 8:5). Arno Borst notes that some insisted the origins of mankind in the Bible were Germanic.[41] Hildegard von Bingen, in her Adam et Eva Teutonica lingua loquebantur, que in diverse non dividitur ut Romana [Adam and Eve spoke the Teutonic language, which being different does not derive from Roman] (1179), claims that Adam and Eve spoke German. It should be noted, though, that other such debates over whether French or English, for example, were spoken in the Garden of Eden were common in other European milieux, as well.

The period from the High Middle Ages into the Renaissance, from c.1200 to c.1500, is often understood as that in which European Scholastics attempted to reconcile the philosophies of Greece and Rome with medieval Christian theology. Using classical texts by authors such as Plato, Aristotle, and Boethius (AD c.480-c.525) – often through Islamic intermediaries such as Ibn Rushd ("Averroes," 1126-1198) – the academics at medieval universities tended to comment on such texts rather than develop explicit and discrete theories of their own. While scholasticism produced such figures as Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Duns Scotus (c.1265-1308), and William of Ockham (1288-1347), by the 1400s, as Jerry H. Bentley argues, humanism was replacing scholasticism, which was found to be an overly formalistic way of explaining the universe:

> The humanists found meaning in neither the abstract syntheses nor the petty logical quarrels of the scholastics, but rather in practical matters of politics and morality and […] in the unique and particular elements of literature and history. The humanists therefore approached the New Testament, among other things, with different purposes in mind than the scholastics. The humanists' interests lay not in the construction of a comprehensive theological system that answered all possible questions bearing on salvation, and that did so with logical rigor worthy of an Aristotle. They valued the New Testament instead as the source of pure moral and religious doctrine and as the record of the early Christian experience (Bentley 8).

During this period, the questions that follow from assuming an Eastern point of origin would cause the ranking of different peoples based on criteria of racial antiquity and purity. Between 1450 and 1550, young university students, whose study of classical texts yielded very different conclusions from those of Petrarch and the other Italian humanists, glorified the pre-Christian past of the Germanic states. Italians, inspired by Greek and Roman writers such as Plato and Cicero, emphasized the use of the study of rhetoric and moral philosophy in developing the unique capacities and abilities of human beings. The humanism developing in the Germanic states, though, considered human beings as almost wholly dependent on divine order. In Germany, humanism would be built on an imagined Biblical past rather than an envisioned future improved by the *studia humanitatis*.

This kind of idealization of the past was responsible for disputes between pupils and their masters at German universities, which greatly intensified after the rediscovery of Tacitus' De origine et situ Germanorum (AD 98), which German humanists, such as Jacob Wimpfeling (1450-1528) and Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522), used to advance their claims to autochthony and universal European dominion. The sole extant copy of the so-called Germania had been uncovered in a German monastery by the Italian scholar Enoch d'Ascoli and was reprinted in Nuremberg in 1473. This text, which for Italian writers merely confirmed the inveterate barbarism of the Germanic tribes, highlighted for German authors the simple virtues and invincibility of their ancestors, as well as leading them to conclude that they had been on the Eurasian continent *ab origine* and were still racially pure. In his Briefe zu Beförderung der Humanität [Letters on the Conveyance of Humanity] (1793-97), Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) would encourage his compatriots to read Tacitus to find the authentic German character that had been obscured by Christianity. Joachimsen notes in his essay "Tacitus im deutschen Humanismus" [Tacitus in German Humanism], that the text spoke to eschatological concerns as well as to originary ones:

> Bei Tacitus liegt das Problem des Nachlebens bis zum Humanismus in so fern einfach, als er bekanntlich seit der Karolingerzeit verschollen war, seine Entdeckung ist in so fern besonders interessant, als sie nicht das Ergebnis

> eines Zufalls, sondern planmäßiger, lange fortgesetzter Bemühungen ist"[xiii] (Gesammelte Aufsätze 276).

Tacitus threw into question Christian ideas of life after death by emphasizing the belief systems of Norse mythology, in which on *Ragnarok* – the day on which mortals and the gods would meet their end – the forces of evil would gather and sail to Asgard to do battle with the gods. Fenris would swallow Wotan, Thor would die as he kills the Midgard serpent, and Heimdall and Loki would kill each other. Only a few gods would be left, a new star would be born, and the Norse Adam and Eve, Lif and Lithrasir, would repopulate the world with human beings.

Accompanying this emphasis on the eastern, Biblical origins of the German people came a theological and cultural battle against the Catholic Church and all that was Latinate, for which the standard bearer was Martin Luther.[42] Luther argues in "An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation von des christlichen Standes Besserung" [To the Christian nobility of the German nation on the improvement of Christian conditions] (1520) that the tyrannical Latin had exploited the noble German. To Luther, the German language was the fourth holy language after Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Luther accepted a theory that held much currency at the time that the Biblical ancestor Ashkenaz had "given" the Germans their language. Ashkenaz was one of the three sons of Gomer, who was a son of Japheth (Genesis 10:3), thus a grandson of

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[xiii] In Tacitus lies the problem of the afterlife, which until Humanism was simple. Missing since Carolingian times, as is well known, its discovery is particularly interesting in so far as it is not the result of an unscheduled accident, but of long repeated efforts.

Noah and a founder of the one of the tribes of the Japhetic race. (It might be noted that according to the ancient Greeks, Prometheus was also a son of Japheth, or Iapetos.) The name Ashkenaz, which denotes "scattered fire" in Hebrew, has been associated since at least the Middle Ages with northern peoples, and had hitherto been considered the *Stamm* or "stem" of the Saxons. In Jeremiah 51:27, the people of Ashkenaz are mentioned in connection with the kingdom of Ararat, in the Cacausus, where Noah's ark is said to have landed. It has also been postulated that we may recognize the tribe of Ashkenaz in Europe in names such as *Scandia* and *Scandinavia*. Well into the nineteenth century, scholars such as Protestant theologian A. W. Knobel argued that Ashkenaz is to be identified with the German "race."[43]

During the Reformation, some claimed to have produced "proof" of the Japhetic genealogy of the German people. In 1510 an anonymous Alsatian writer, known as "the Revolutionary of the Upper Rhine," published a treatise that, among a list of peasant complaints, foreshadowed the following of Adolf Hitler by talking of a thousand-year *Reich* and a Germanic Adam. As Poliakov notes, one of several sixteenth-century vernacular authors of the time who depicted Adam as of German origin, "the Revolutionary" wrote that Adam's progeny were free from original sin, since, the writer concluded, Jesus came only to save the infidel Jews.[44]

Luther himself would prove to be foundational for Germanic culture, and particularly to the history of translation in German, for he was the first to translate the Bible into German without the use of Latinisms. Herder, Goethe, Novalis, and

Nietzsche would cite the grace, beauty, and German-ness of his Bible. As Antoine Berman notes, while Luther and his team of scholars spent over ten years (1521-1534) studying Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, their aim was the *Verdeutschung*, the "Germanization," of the text, thus establishing, particularly for the German Romantics, the affirmation of literature itself in German.[45] Where Dante's Vita Nuova (1294) and Divina Commedia (1321) had established the Florentine dialect as the base of the modern Italian language, and Du Bellay's Défense et Illustration de la langue française (1549) would present influential arguments for writing in the French vernacular, they would not present the affirmation of their own spiritual cultures through language as did Luther's Bible, for Dante and Du Bellay wrote in languages that already had the weight of Latin literature behind them. Berman writes of Luther's Bible,

> Si la Bible de Luther joue ce rôle, c'est parce qu'elle se veut une *Verdeutschung* des Écritures liée historiquement à un vaste mouvement de reformulation de la foi, de renouvellement du rapport aux textes sacrés, de réinterprétation radicale des Testaments, ainsi qu'à une affirmation religieuse nationale face à l'«impérialisme» de Rome (Berman 48).[xiv]

This reaction against Rome would overshadow even Luther's attempts to stay close to the older Hebrew text, for, as Berman notes, it is the Latin that constitutes the

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[xiv] It Luther's Bible plays that role, it is because it wanted a Germanization of the Scriptures historically linked to a vast movement of reformulation of faith, of renewal of the relation to the sacred texts, of radical reinterpretation of the Testaments, as well as a national religious affirmation in the face of the "imperialism" of Rome.

linguistic, religious, and cultural horizon of Luther's thought.[46] Despite this, Luther, who was above all concerned with the spiritual salvation of the Germans, was more modest in his claims about the origin of the Germanic peoples than were the humanists, who would establish the fascination with the purity of the German language to the point that language and race would be almost inextricably linked well into the twentieth century. Renaissance Germans, as seen by the humanists, needed to identify themselves with the invincible Germanic tribes who overthrew the Roman Empire, attitudes which led to further emphasis on their being autochthons. Joachimsen observes of the changes between 1450 and 1550, that a national Romanticism emerged, particularly among young men, that emphasized a type of ideal German who was blessedly simple, as opposed to crudely simple, which is how most Romans had thought of the conquering barbarians.[47]

The re-discovery of Tacitus's Germania also reinforced the doubts of Renaissance humanists about Roman history. Such doubts began with the Roman (sometimes called "Trojan") myth, which tells of the founding of Rome after the survivors of the sack of Troy established several other cities in the intervening centuries as they made their way from the Anatolian to the Italian peninsulas, as recounted in Livy's Ab urbe condita (c.29 BC) and Virgil's Aeneid (19 BC). During the Reformation, such debates would begin to include the general public when von Gunzberg, the most popular Reformation spokesman of the 1520s, published his own vernacular translation of the Germania in 1526. This served to popularize the

aggressive attitudes of German intellectuals and their often much less educated followers. It would further weaken the Latinate position even among Latin thinkers themselves, for, as A. G. Dickens has observed, "there arose and spread that appealing image of Teutonic integrity which ended by capturing the impressionable Machiavelli and, alongside his more factual admiration for the orderly government and civic spirit of German cities, served to reinforce his charges of decadence against the Italians" (Dickens 36). Dickens maintains that long before Enlightenment travelers described what Rousseau would call the "noble savage," the prototype of so simple and appealing a figure can be traced to the cult of Tacitus and "the praise accorded by the *devotio moderna* to the pious wisdom of simple men" (ibid.).

By the second half of the sixteenth century, the center of interest in the German language would shift to Holland. This was partially due to the efforts of Ioannes Goropius Becanus (1518-1572), a Netherlandish physician with linguistic interests, who authored the agglutinative Originum Gentium libri IX, in quibus: Atvatica, Gigantomachia, Niloscopium, Cronia, Indo-Scytica, Saxonica, Goto Danica, Amazonica, Venetica et Hyperborea (1569), a nine-volume study of the supposed origins of various Eurasian ethnicities. Becanus' compatriots regarded German as one of the four holy languages, as had Luther, but ranked German behind Hebrew, above Greek and Latin. Into the seventeenth century, the idea that the Germans formed a pure race with a pure language would be perpetuated in theology, philosophy, and science, and in literary works such as Jacob Christoph

Grimmelhausen's Simplicissimus (1669-76). During this period, the search for Germanic origins and the fascination with India would finally come to overlap. Given the line of thinking that stems from the humanist rediscovery of Tacitus and the search for a set of Germanic origins that predate Christianity, the later identification of the Germanic tribes with the warlike "Aryans" of the Ganges Plain is unsurprising. Two centuries after Becanus, however, Europeans would come to see one holy language as predating all others: Sanskrit.

III

Enlightenment Descriptions of the First Society

At the start of the eighteenth century, as is well known, "Germany" consisted of approximately eighteen hundred separate territories, each with distinct sovereignty. While the citizens of Germanic territories felt that their cultural development had been retarded by the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), a certain unity existed among them, centered not so much on a feeling of "nationalism" *per se* – for the modern conception of nations was just developing – as on a sense of Germanic culture. This cultural unity would be nurtured by the emerging rationalist theories of what is perhaps an ironic term in light of the subject of this study: *die Aufklärung*, "the Enlightenment." Armed with Descartes' anti-scholasticism, Montaigne's skepticism, Newton's dynamic science, Leibniz's calculus, and Locke's empirical democracy, Enlightenment thinkers in the early eighteenth century attempted to, as Peter Gay puts

it, remake socio-political society and national culture in the image of nature, through the use of reason:

> The men of the Enlightenment united on a vastly ambitious program, a program of secularism, humanity, cosmopolitanism, and freedom, above all, freedom in its many forms – freedom from arbitrary power, freedom of speech, freedom of trade, freedom to realize one's talents, freedom of aesthetic response, freedom, in a word, of moral man to make his own way in the world" (Gay I, 3).

Indeed, "the freedom of moral man to make his own way in the world" meant for many dissociation from the strictures of Biblical genealogy. In this period of Cartesian logic, detailed genealogies that traced all peoples back to Adam began to die out, and the idea of a larger humanity was broken down into nations and nationalities. Enlightenment thinkers were beginning to have doubts on the scientific grounds upon which Adam was considered a universal ancestor. In Germany, the power of the stories of Genesis had already been shaken by the humanists' attempts to rehabilitate the German gods. Due to such shifts, what come into focus in this period are issues of what one might call "subjective teleology," that is, of the perfection of the individual and his immediate collective.

Despite the waning of Noachian genealogies, however, the Biblical flood came to be seen as an empirically provable phenomenon. The French astronomers Jean-Dominique Cassini (1625-1712) and Jean-Sylvain Bailly (1736-1793) felt that

the presence of seashells in locales far from major bodies of salt water confirmed the hypothesis of a universal inundation and therefore corroborated the story of the Flood. At first, Bailly calculated mathematically that the earliest post-diluvian men would have been situated in the habitable regions closest to the North Pole. Further calculations, however, lead him to transfer them to the valley of the Ganges River, where he felt the original humans founded the arts and sciences. Other thinkers argued that the highest mountains were known to tower between India and China, so man must have originated there, for those landmasses would have emerged first as the waters of the Flood receded. Most scholars in the early Enlightenment, however, were willing to concede the affiliation of Europeans with peoples of the Middle East, found in "indisputable" Biblical and classical sources, but were reluctant to do the same with the monster-worshipping races who dwelled in mysterious lands beyond the tallest Nepali peaks. Be that as it may, while religion and philosophy had moved European interest toward India in ancient and medieval times, Europeans now refocused on India through the lens of science.

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) became convinced of a common origin of nations and a radical primitive language shared by all peoples in the first Japhetic eras and the *germanische Frühzeit* (early Germanic times). In Nouveaux essais sur l'entendement humain [New Essays in Human Understanding] (1704-05, published 1765) he argues "there is nothing [in this discussion of languages and migrations of peoples] which does not support the belief in the common origin of all

nations and in a primitive root-language" (Leibniz 281). Based mostly on his own Romantic images of Norse mythology, Leibniz related this language to the elevated speech of German epic heroes to be found in Grimmelhausen's popular Der Abentheurliche Simplicissimus [The Adventurous Simplicissimus] (1669), although the parody appears to be lost on him. Leibniz questioned the argument made by contemporaries that Hebrew was the first language, for he thought that German must be closer to this original "root" language than Hebrew or Arabic because German was more "natural," less altered by history than Middle Eastern languages. Leibniz uses the verb to "Goropize" (from Goropius Becanus), meaning to claim a ridiculous etymology, but he states that Becanus "was not far wrong in claiming that the Germanic language which he called Cimbric [from the Cimbri, an ancient tribe inhabiting Northern Germany] has even more marks of the primitive than Hebrew" (ibid. 286). He also inveighed against French and Swedish contemporaries on the question of the origins of the Franks and Goths. Leibniz made Germany out to be the cradle of what would be called the "Caucasian" race in his Brevis designatio meditationum de originibus gentium ductis potissimum ex judicio linguarum [Brief description of ideas on the origin of nations best derived from the judgment of languages] (1710).

Despite the fact that Leibniz believed in a common origin and language of nations, debates over German autochthony and the doctrine of the unity of mankind were waged by scientists and historians who had come to focus their attention on the

monogenesis-polygenesis problem: the argument over whether modern nations stemmed from one original culture or a plurality of them. The more influential group in this debate until the late eighteenth century, "monogenecists," as they would later come to be called, for the term was not used at the time, usually held that all societies owed their existence to the Hebrew or Egyptian civilization. What united monogenecist and polygenecists, however, was the belief (found in Bailly) that arts were "invented" by such an original civilization.

Purported German autochthony also found its strong detractors, most notably among the French *philosophes*, and in fact the doctrine of polygenism's most formidable proponent was François-Marie Arouet, or Voltaire (1694-1778). A disciple of the English deists, Voltaire turned the theory of polygenism in favor of India in his Essai sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations [Essay on the manners and spirit of nations] (1756).[48] This was part of his search for an ancient religion that would undermine the unique position of Christianity. Voltaire was possibly the greatest European admirer of India in the mid-eighteenth century and he unequivocally set India up as the original nation and center of diffusion for all knowledge of the arts and sciences. One might note, however, that he would not concede, as did Montesquieu, that knowledge had been introduced to France by Germanic tribes. Yet, the ground for thinking of India as the mother of art and science had already been prepared by various travelers who had told astonished Europeans about the ancient Indian cave-temples outside Bombay: Ajanta, Elephanta,

and Ellora. But more immediate influences on Voltaire were Bailly, the traveler and scholar Le Gentil de la Galaisière (1725-1792), and the English writers John Holwell (1711-1798) and Alexander Dow (d. 1779). Holwell and Dow, like their countryman Bysshe a century earlier, gave prominence in their writings on India to the ancient wisdom of the Brahmins. Voltaire similarly attributed a degree of antiquity to India that enabled him to undermine Judeo-Christian doctrine, notably by basing arguments on similarities of proper names. He argues that the names and figures of Adam, Eve, and Abraham were derived from the Hindu Adimo, Heva, and Brahma, respectively.[49] Poliakov says of Voltaire, "si aucun homme n'en a fait autant que [lui] pour démolir les idoles et les préjugés du passé, nul n'a autant propagé et amplifié les aberrations du nouvel âge de la science" (Poliakov 175).[xv]

Voltaire emphasized that pure races advance and mixed ones do not. Influenced by philosopher and poet Bernard le Bouvier de Fontenelle (1657-1757), for whom science and theology were the same category of inquiry, Voltaire was distinctly mechanical-minded, as were so many of the thinkers of his time, in believing that Nature is uniform. He found no use for the stories of the Old Testament in his search for the origins of the human spirit; yet, he saw that his philosophy was continually threatened by the monogenecists, whose arguments, he felt, supported the dangerous idea of the infinite power of God. To use an epithet

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[xv] If no man ever did more to demolish the idols and prejudices of the past, neither has any man done so much to propagate and elaborate the aberrations of the new age of science.

Voltaire applied to the Goths, their ideas were "barbaric." Voltaire's views on the subject would be bolstered by articles in Denis Diderot's (1713-1784) and Jean le Rond d'Alembert's (1717-1783) Encyclopédie [Encyclopedia] (1751-1782). While this work was more popular in its day for its explanations of contemporary common technology than for its liberal philosophy, it likewise suggested, in the article on India, that the "les sciences peuvent être plus anciennes en Inde qu'en Egypte."[xvi] Diderot and many other of the *philosophes* were of the deist school, some of whom attempted to turn the Bible against itself by proving that Moses had stolen his revelations from the sages of ancient Egypt, who, like Plato, had in turn learned them in India, as Philostratus had indicated.

The separation of science and religion was, however, much less cut and dried for non-deist thinkers. The natural historian Georges Buffon (1707-1788) elaborated a theory more coherent than those of many of his contemporaries, according to which the first people "digne de porter ce nom, digne en tous nos respects, comme créateur des sciences, des arts et toutes les institutions utile" (Buffon 102)[xvii] had emerged about 30,000 years ago in the area of Central Asia that is now part of Siberia and Mongolia. Buffon argues that later other ignorant, barbarian groups had destroyed this Edenic civilization and plunged the whole of humanity into ignorance. As per Bysshe, Holwell, Dow, and Voltaire, Buffon felt that only the Brahmins of India were

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[xvi] The sciences could be more ancient in India than in Egypt (cited in Duchet 57).

[xvii] Worthy of carrying this name, worthy of all our respect, as creator of the sciences, the arts, and all useful institutions.

able to preserve a flicker of the old learning, and even they got the perfect astronomy of the first people all wrong. This anthropodicy was based on the speculations of Cassini and Bailly and seemed to echo the old mythologies of the Golden Age and the Fall:

> La perte des sciences, cette première plaie faite à l'humanité par la hache de la barbarie, fut sans doute l'effet d'une malheureuse revolution qui aura détruit peut-être en peu d'années l'ouvrage et les travaux de plusieurs siècles; car nous ne pouvons douter que ce premier peuple, aussi puissant d'abord que savant, ne se soit longtemps maintenu dans sa splendeur, puisqu'il a fait de si grands progrès dans les sciences, et par conséquent dans tous les arts qu'exige leur etude (ibid. 106).[xviii]

How Buffon knows that this first society had such extensive and perfect knowledge, however, is not entirely clear. While medieval bestiaries and Renaissance works preceded Buffon's Histoire naturelle de l'homme [Natural History of Man] (1749), it remained for nearly a century the main source of information about exotic animals and peoples for scientists we would now call zoologists and ethnologists. While it may reflect the intellectual prejudices of the public at large at his time, it also reflects a degree of sensitivity to other cultures. Buffon believed that one of the

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[xviii] The loss of the sciences, this first wound inflicted on humanity by the axe of barbarism, undoubtedly had the effect of an unfortunate revolution that destroyed in perhaps a few years the labor of several centuries, for we cannot doubt that this first people, as powerful at first as they were knowledgeable, did not long maintain their splendor before they made such great progress in science, and therefore in all the arts that demand their study.

characteristics that separates human beings from other animals is the drive for "perfectability," which he, and later Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), would argue had no need of propitious circumstances to manifest itself. While he believed that the influence of climate and the mixing of blood modeled bodies and faces, he argued that the "essential characters" of races perpetuated themselves.

Buffon's great rival, the Swedish taxonomist Linnaeus (Carl von Linné, 1707-1778), who shared the orthodox Protestantism of many of his contemporaries, advanced views which conformed more closely to a literal interpretation of the Bible, and therefore seemed to defy logic. C. C. Gillespie explains Linnaeus's "literal and complacent providentialism" by saying that he "held beliefs rather than ideas about nature," such as '"this variety of Lapland moss grows just here and not there because God made it grow here and not there'" (Gillespie 141). Linnaeus did take the decisive step of including man in the animal kingdom in his Systema Naturae, Fundamenta botanica et Genera plantarum [System of Nature] (1735), however, assigning to man an animal nobility which was reminiscent of the lauded nobility of the Gothic tribes. His contemporaries would attempt to replicate this nobility. The French mathematician and linguist Pierre Louis Moreau de Maupertius (1698-1759) performed experimental tests, attempting to breed not only a human being but one with a noble nature.

Maupertius, however, is remembered more for his contributions to the study of language, and like Leibniz, was concerned with its origins. Ronald Grimsley

states, Maupertius' use of the word *origine* in the title of his work, Reflexions philosophiques sur l'Origine des langues et la signification des mots [Philosophical reflexions on the origin or languages and the signification of words] (1748), "n'accuse donc nulle preference pour le point de vue historique, mais seulement de desir d'examiner le fondement ontologique du langage"[xix] (Grimsley 4). Maupertius was more a disciple of political philosophers such as John Locke (1632-1704) and Étienne Condillac (1714-1780) than of the linguists of his time, and thus emphasized from the beginning of his career the influence of language on the formation of knowledge. He felt that the original language of man must have been simpler than our contemporary tongues, but that this universal "base" language assured a certain parallelism of scientific evolution. As Grimsley points out, however, Maupertius' arguments rest on the presupposition that the first human perceptions were not of well-defined bits of experience to which language attached discrete signs, but that they attached a sign to a global perception. The idea that language derives from the perception of a larger, impersonal phenomenon allowed for the development of national identities based on languages that reflected endemic national "spirits."

Rousseau makes observations similar to those of Maupertius in Discours sur l'origine de l'inegalité [Discourse on the origin of inequality] (1755), in which he argues that initially each word represented an entire phrase. Rousseau did not make differential judgments about what he conceived as the various human races, and

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[xix] Shows no preference for the historical point of view, but only the desire to examine the ontological foundation of language.

criticized what he thought were prejudices and presumptuous judgments on the part of Voltaire and Buffon. While his "natural man" is presented as hypothetical, Rousseau is a believer in the Christian doctrine of the Fall. Human civilization as it has emerged is thus a colossal blunder that alienates people from Nature, the eternal, fundamental reality. In Du Contrat Social [The Social Contract] (1762), he argues that it is the job of a legislating government to make people mutually dependent and therefore to put them more in touch with their natural interdependence. While Michael Allen Gillespie argues that the freedom implicit in the metaphysics of Descartes became explicit in the philosophy of Rousseau,[50] it must be asserted that true will is primarily hypothetical for Rousseau, like the "Natural Man," a reaction to strict social mores and restrictive "progress."

In Germany, however, scientists such as J. F. Blumenbach (1752-1840), who attempted to study human races empirically as Linnaeus had done with plants, were narrowing the gap between the hypothetical and the actual. Blumenbach was the first to use the term "Caucasian," because he felt that the Georgians were the most beautiful and noble-looking "white" race, and because, as Vico had pointed out, Noah's Ark had apparently landed on the Caucasian Mount Ararat. The Caucasus is also the traditional site of the imprisonment and punishment of Prometheus. Prometheus's theft of fire for man is usually seen as an allegorical representation of man's gaining knowledge, which, as noted above, came to be associated with the figure of Agni-Shiva as educator of man.

Despite the initial input on each side of the monogenesis-polygenesis argument, the problem did not receive widespread attention until French magistrate Antoine Yves Goguet (1716-1758) brought out his celebrated L'origine des lois, arts et sciences, et leur progres parmi les nations le plus anciènnes [The origin of laws, arts, and sciences, and their progress among the most ancient nations] (1758). Goguet suggested that architecture must have been the first art to be invented by the original society because it was connected to basic human needs. He argues that the simple unadorned forms of architecture, such as the Egyptian pyramids, were the earliest examples of human effort, the decoration of which was a sign of later embellishment that was refined but superfluous. Goguet was not the only scholar to give currency to this idea at that time. The German archeologist and art historian, Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768) had become a pioneer in art historiography a few years earlier when he attached an evolutionary philosophy to the relationship between simplicity and necessity in his discussion of ancient Greek art in Reflexions sur l'imitation des oeuvres des Grecs en peinture et en sculpture [Reflexions on the imitation of Greek works in painting and sculpture] (1755). Winckelmann's Romantic image of classical Greece had developed from the aesthetics of French Neo-classicism, but it was also bound up with the changing conception of classical antiquity caused by the development of archeology into a science. The eighteenth century was the first great age of modern archeological explorations, marked by the discoveries in Campania of Herculaneum (1738), Pompeii (1748), and Paestum

(1750), followed by the journey of Stuart and Revett to Athens (1751). Giulio Carlo Argan notes that for Winckelmann "nobile semplicità e quieta grandezza [delle rovine Greche a Paestum] significavano verità e chiarezza logica, l'opposto dell'enfasi e del potere suggestivo classicista" (Serra 12).[xx]

Winckelmann argued that Greek art was imbued with a clear, teleological progress that could be witnessed through an evolving simplicity, as opposed to the art of India and China, which lacked any notion of progress and was filled with ornament that was both superficial and superfluous. Such ideas about Indian and Chinese art were to become influential on the art historical ideas of Hegel, whose followers would propagate them in the nineteenth century, as will be considered below, in chapter four. Winckelmann signaled a break with the Latinist Humanist tradition, however, in his expounding a new humanism in the guise of a new Hellenism. He would attach to Greece qualities that had heretofore been associated with the ancient Goths – nobility, simplicity, liberty, and youth. These are qualities associated with Dionysus and, as has been noted, Dionysus's affiliation with India is already to be found in Greco-Roman texts. Winckelmann's work is to a not insignificant degree a response to the problem of German identity and in many ways runs parallel to the concurrent movement of the Gothic Revival, which sought to discover authentic German roots. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) would be deeply influenced by Winckelmann's Hellenism and Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835)

[xx] Noble simplicity and still immensity indicated truth and logical clarity, the opposite of the suggestive, classicist emphasis and power.

would politically institutionalize it when he became Prussian Minister of Education in the form of the new humanist grammar school: the *gymnasium*.

Many of these archeological discoveries would help to foster the theory that propitious climatic conditions might also influence cultural achievement. Despite Voltaire's detractions, climatic determinism as a theme and even movement was influential in the eighteenth century, especially in the writings of Montesquieu. Winckelmann sought to demonstrate that the progress of Greek art towards perfection owed much to the climate of Greece. Climatic determinism, used in conjunction with a clearly teleological notion of "progress," fed into the objective of art historians such as Winckelmann to trace the evolution of artistic styles. Eighteenth-century histories of art, instead of concentrating on the development of the arts in a particular nation, tended to treat broad issues such as the universal development of the arts in all nations.

In contrast to Winckelmann, the French antiquarian Claude Philippe de Turbières (Comte de Caylus, 1692-1765), not only took Indian art seriously, but assigned it an essential place in his discourse on the origin and progress of architecture. Caylus firmly attributed the invention of architecture to the Egyptians. As Mitter points out, simplicity and originality were the two principal requirements for the invention of architecture, the two features present to a high degree in Egyptian architecture, and which Caylus felt the "imitative" Indian lacked.[51] The assumptions on which Caylus' hypothesis rested were challenged in 1803 by the German

antiquarians, Bernard Rode and Andreas Riem, in an article on ancient painting attached to a reprint of Winckelmann's Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums [History of Anceint Art] (1764), itself the first attempt to integrate the history of art into that of society as a whole. The authors, first of all, denied that Egypt was the inventor of arts subsequently imitated by Indians. They also questioned the doctrine that simplicity was necessarily an indication of antiquity. To the contrary, they asserted, simplicity was a clear sign of maturity and good taste, whereas elaborateness was a reflection of the infancy of an art, thus reversing Caylus' argument.

As traveling became increasingly easier for Europeans, with the establishment of British power in India in the second part of the eighteenth century, there developed an entirely new genre of traveler very different from his predecessor in tastes and interests, for he sought alternatives to beauty. The phenomenon of the "Grand Tour" – a tour of the principal cities and places of interest in Europe, meant to be an essential part of the education of young men of good birth and fortune, which grew to include parts of the Middle East and India – encouraged travel purely for the sake of aesthetic pleasures. The major problem in aesthetics concerns the two basic approaches to the problem of beauty: the objective, which asserts that beauty inheres in the object and that judgments concerning it may have objective validity, and the subjective, which tends to identify the beautiful with that which pleases the observer. The objective position was put forth and defended by Plato, Aristotle, and Lessing, among others. The subjective position emerges in the early eighteenth century in

England and Germany, with thinkers like Hume, Alexander Baumgarten (1714-1762), and Edmund Burke (1729 1797), who would further break down subjective categories of beauty. The first alternative to the category of beauty to emerge was the concept of the sublime. Inspired by, among other things, the first-century-AD Roman essay "On the Sublime" attributed to Longinus, Burke placed the sublime on the same level as beauty and made them twin principal categories in his art criticism. In A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful (1757), Burke argues that the essential ingredient of the sublime is obscurity of the subject, or an inducement to ignorance that arouses fear. The enormous and mysterious cave-temples of India, recently seen by British and French travelers for the first time, were prime candidates for such an art-historical theory.

A second influential aesthetic movement to emerge at this time was that of the "picturesque," a category meant to accommodate subjects to which neither the terms "beautiful" nor "sublime" could properly be applied. The picturesque would develop from Sir William Temple's (1628-1699) essay "Upon the Gardens of Epicurus" (1685), first published in 1692, which praises what its author imagined to be the Asian manner of garden design. While Temple's essay did not cause Europeans to imitate Asian gardens, it helped to open up European minds to the possibility of breaking with the formality of Neo-classicism, in favor of the "disarray" found in the arts of Asia. Such supposed disorder would become a vital element in picturesque aesthetics, which advocated irregularity of landscape in both nature and art and

suggested that even images that were artificially rude were preferable to extreme order.

In India, on the other hand, Europeans found statuary and architectural details that at first appeared to the uninitiated eye to be so disorganized as to be not even picturesque, suggesting instead cultural crudeness. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, as reliable information about India available in the West increased, views began to change. This was also due to the beginnings of scientific archeology and to the Grand Tour, for, as precursors of the Romantic Movement, new travelers came specifically in search of the sublime and picturesque elements in Indian architecture. Coincident with the extension of the area of the Grand Tour was a shift from the traditional academic concept of rules in art to the importance of taste. As Mitter notes, it is only from the middle of the eighteenth century onward that one can discern the growth of two distinct traditions: the one, which undertook to record systematically all the relevant facts about Indian art, and the other, which engaged primarily in speculations about its nature and importance.[52] The nature and importance of Indian themes, as has been noted above, had by now been discussed for over two millennia; the fact that Europeans began systematically to research what they had been judging is more significant. Despite such systematization, however, and alongside the development of a Romantic interest in exoticism, there emerged the fundamental Enlightenment emphasis on the importance of the subject. The

combination of these two elements was to prove vital for the development of what may be termed Romanticism's views of India.

Such an emphasis on the subjective is attributable to the philosophy of Descartes (if not to Plato), which led European philosophy into the subject-object debates that would also prove crucial for their conceptions of individual freedom. Descartes' metaphysics undermined the teachings of scholasticism by emphasizing the primacy of the individual consciousness. In the central part of his philosophical approach to clear and distinct ideas, as this appears in Discours sur la méthode [Discourse on Method] (1637), he follows in a long tradition reaching back to Plato's cave, skeptical of the evidence of the senses as against the more reliable abstract perceptions of the intellect, and seeing such intellectual knowledge as a kind of illumination derived from a higher source than man's own mind. Descartes established a new kind of metaphysics that hoped to reconcile the finite categories of natural reason with the infinities of the divine. While Scholastic psychology and epistemology were principally concerned with human preservation and prosperity, Descartes recognized that political freedom was essential to his metaphysics, and made it implicit in his philosophy.

Michael Allen Gillespie, however, points out the danger of Descartes' emphasis on this subject:

> Descartes dreamed of a universal science that would enable man to master nature, but such a science was called into question by the radical skepticism

> engendered by the possibility of an omnipotent God. Descartes believed he had found a ground for human knowledge that was invulnerable to all deception in his principle *ego cogito ergo sum*. This principle is the basis for human freedom and the mastery of nature. Man knows that he is and knows that he is as a thing that thinks. To think, for Descartes, however, is ultimately to will. His fundamental act is thus a self-confirming act of the will, made possible by the fact that this will, like that of God, is infinite. Man thus has the capacity to assert himself even against God. Man, however, does not have God's perfect knowledge and is therefore not omnipotent. In the first instance, man is thus free only within the circle of his self-thinking. Outside this bastion of reason, the chaos set loose by the possibility of a malicious God still reigns. Descartes' universal science, which is meant to master this chaos, thus depends upon a demonstration that God is not malicious and does not deceive us (Gillespie xiii-xiv).

This assumption about the benevolence, or at least indifference, of God would help pave the way for the other thinker of the period who would prove particularly influential on the Indo-Germans: the Dutch rationalist Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), who had been a disciple of Descartes and whose philosophy relocates man's place in Nature by equating Nature itself with God. Spinoza believed that human beings are able to perceive only a few of the infinite qualities of God, who exists among dimensions far beyond those of the visible world. Trained in Talmudic scholarship,

Spinoza's philosophy is summarized in the Ethica [Ethics] (1677), in which he derives ethics by deduction from his fundamental principle of God, or Nature, as everything. The highest good, he asserted, was a knowledge of God, which was capable of liberating one from the tyranny of the passions and from fear; this knowledge helped one to resign oneself to one's destiny and thus showed the way to true blessedness.

Despite his affiliation of nature with God, Spinoza's philosophy expresses little sympathy with nature alongside a nearly boundless love of God. For many contemporaries who ridiculed his methods, Spinoza was to be reviled as an atheist, and his unconventional views led him to be excommunicated by a rabbinical court. He would, however, be rescued from oblivion, in a sense, by the German Romantics, who would positively identify his acceptance of destiny with the Hindu caste system, and would rediscover his formulation of God and nature in the Sanskrit texts translated at the end of the eighteenth century.

Chapter 2

OMINOUS OVERTURES

"Die mit der Französischen Revolution einstezende Gegenaufklärung begründet eine Kritik der Moderne, die sich inzwischen weit verzweigt hat. Ihr gemeinsamer Nenner ist die Überzeugung, daß Sinnverlust, Anomie und Entfremdung, daß die Patholgien der bürgerlichen, überhaupt der posttradionalen Gesellschaft auf die Rationalisierung der Lebenswelt selber zurückgeführt werden können."

– Jürgen Habermas, Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, Band 2: Zur Kritik der funktionalistischen Vernunft (1981).[xxi]

I

Herder on National Spirits

The reaction against the "rationalization of the life-world" of which Habermas writes can be seen in the work of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803), one of many writers who came to reject both the Enlightenment emphasis on objectivity and the tradition of Germanic Biblical origins. Between 1766 and 1768, Klopstock

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[xxi] The counter-Enlightenment that set in immediately after the French Revolution grounded a critique of modernity that has since branched off in different directions. Their common denominator is the conviction that loss of meaning, anomie, and alienation – the pathologies of bourgeois society, indeed of post-traditional society generally – can be traced back to the rationalization of the life-world itself (McCarthy II, 148).

shifted the focus of his work from writing about the Bible and the Greco-Roman classics to composing epic and lyric poetry about German mythology, creating a subjective vision that broke with the rationalism that had dominated German literature in the first half of the eighteenth century. His praise of his native tongue, "Unsere Sprache" (1785), put forth the notion that the German language was still as pure and as powerful as the blood of the race was reputed once to have been:

> Daß keine, welche lebt, mit Deutschlands Sprache sich
> In den zu kühnen Wettstreit wage!
> Sie ist, damit ichs kurz, mit ihrer Kraft es sage,
> An mannigfalter Uranlage
> Zu immer neuer, und doch deutscher Wendung reich;
> Ist, was wir selbst in jenen grauen Jahren,
> Da Tacitus uns forschte, waren,
> Gesondert, ungemischt und nur sich selber gleich (Klopstock 182).[xxii]

A cult of the German language and mythology would rise around Klopstock's poetry in the 1780s and '90s, but classical mythology retained devotees such as Winckelmann, Goethe, and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781). The possibility of a poetic vision as subjective as Klopstock's had been presented in literature by

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[xxii] None that lives dares pit itself in the over-bold contest against the German language! It is, so that short lived I may go, with its legendary strength, from primeval diversity, to the ever newer, and yet German expression is enough; It is, as we ourselves were in those grey years, when Tacitus researched us, separate, unblended and equal only to itself.

Goethe a decade earlier than this, and in philosophy two years prior to that by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). The subject of this chapter is the role of such subjectivity within a wider vision of the universe beyond the human senses. It will address three developments in German thought that foreshadow the appropriation of Hindu and Buddhist ideas by the German Romantics: Herder's "nationalism," Fichte's subjectivity, and the discoveries of early French and English India scholars such as Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil-Duperron (1731-1805) and William Jones (1746-1794). Of these figures, Fichte stands alone as not sharing any fascination for Indian ideas with his successors, the early Romantics, and his mentor, Kant.

In Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik [Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics] (1783) Kant proposes that "transcendental idealism," the name that he assigned to his system, is the doctrine that the systematization of spatio-temporal appearances comprises all theoretical knowledge, a notion intimated in Plato's "Allegory of the Cave." Kant's use of the term *Dinge an sich* (things-in-themselves), to designate the imperceptible essence of objects, was intended to emphasize the need to consider objects apart from their representations. Kant attempted to rescue both rationality and human autonomy from the arguments of empiricism by both deepening and limiting the subjective foundation that Descartes had established.[1] Hume's skepticism attacked Cartesian rationalism by arguing that causality could not be logically deduced or derived from experience. Kant recognized the importance of this critique for he felt that both Descartes and Spinoza

had unjustifiably laid claim to knowledge that transcends the limits of the human understanding. In response to such skepticism, Kant provided a critique of reason, which he felt was necessary before human autonomy and morality could be adequately explained. He thought that, unlike the proofs of classical and medieval metaphysics, a self-critical, "enlightened" reason could explain how human beings experience space and time and how they interact with other rational, willing human beings. Kant was convinced that his principles of reason refuted empiricist and skeptical arguments because they could be empirically revealed; and that they differed from rationalism and dogmatism because they were simply the conditions of orienting the mind coherently within experience.[2]

Kant also established his system to show that experience occurs primarily within consciousness. He believed that rationalism had contradicted itself by expanding its scope beyond the capacity of the conscious human intellect. The "antinomies," as he called the contradictions that arose through such expansion, indicated that his system must inevitably be dualistic, since the finite and the infinite could not be united. Transcendental idealism is thus a dualistic compromise. In the Kritik der reinen Vernunft [Critique of Pure Reason] (1781), Kant demonstrates the possibility of a causality based on human freedom in addition to the accepted causality based on nature. In the Kritik der praktischen Vernunft [Critique of Practical Reason] (1788), one sees shades of Rousseau as Kant postulates a human causality as the basis for morality. For Kant, man is both in nature – for not all

experience is simply a form of "consciousness" – and above it. Kant argues that freedom is not the caprice of the passions but their subordination to moral law, as Spinoza had maintained. This emphasis on willing the subordination of the passions is one of the emphases that Kant's Romantic successors were to find in Hindu texts, leading them to draw parallels between Spinoza, transcendental idealism, and *Vedanta*. Scholars of *Vedanta* have traditionally concentrated their arguments on questions of dualist compromises, as did Kant with transcendental idealism. Much like a Vedic sage, who might claim to transcend space and time while remaining physically immobile, Kant became reconciled to the idea that everything that one could know could be learned in one's immediate surroundings – in his case, Königsberg.

The immediate post-Kantian philosophers, on the other hand, understood Kant's hypothesis differently. They accepted the notion that the material world is made up of finite representations, but argued that the infinite essence of human existence must transcend such illusions. Ironically, however, Kant's first successor was not really a Kantian. Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) would become known less for explicitly elaborating on Kant's transcendental idealism than for expanding his theories about the Himalayan origin of post-diluvian human beings. He also developed Klopstock's cult of the German language by drawing upon a by then widespread interest in mythology and helping to awaken national traditions and feelings throughout Central Europe. Intellectual historians, such as Richard Wolin,

have argued that the German cultural *Sonderweg*, or "particular path," starts with Herder. That is to say that many of the problematic aspects of the formation of a modern German identity that became familiar in the West in the twentieth century can be found in a fledgling, if also different, form in the writings of Herder.[3] His influence on the youth culture of the *Sturm und Drang* period (1770s –'80s), which, like the *Humanisten*, emphasized the nobility and emotion of the ideal German man, affected the Romanticism of youth throughout Europe well into the twentieth century. The 1770s would see the emergence of the *Sturm und Drang* group, which would include Herder, Goethe and Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805), in whose writings the German Romantics would find the kernels of many of their own ideas.

Herder envisioned a new kind of literature that was passionate and spiritually edifying, rejected the strictures of paternal society, and emphasized the power of the young. In 1770, in Strasbourg, he encouraged the young Goethe, soon to write his profoundly influential Die Leiden des junger Werthers [The Sorrows of Young Werther] (1774), which was received by German society as both sacrilegious and subversive. In the novel, Werther identifies himself with Christ, but audaciously takes no comfort in this identification. He does not acknowledge the salvation that Christ's sacrifice has brought to his believers, and finally, in an act of nihilism, commits suicide. Goethe's book provided one of the spurs for a spate of young, male suicides that would affect many of Romanticism's protagonists. This rupture with traditional society – the revolt against paternal authority through the idealization of

youth – proved in some ways more severe than the disruption of the young students who had championed the vision of Tacitus in the fifteenth century.[4] The *Sturm und Drang* group in the 1770s seems to represent, therefore, the first dramatic modern manifestation of youthful rebellion and conflict between generations in Germany, founded on anxiety about the relationships between modernity, emerging nationalism, and nature. Young rebels believed that the *Aufklärung* that had begun fifty years earlier had failed by depriving man of his soul, religion of its meaning, and German culture of its ability to establish itself on a global stage. Joachim Whaley notes,

> the desire to translate natural relationships into political structures was accompanied by passionate hopes in a society where it seemed perennially that the creation of the true national state was imminent. They had the sensation that contemporary society had gone disastrously wrong and the true Germany might only be reached by a path which in the first instance led, not back, but forward to nature (Roseman 48-49).

Trained as a military physician, Goethe and Herder's collaborator, Schiller attempted to locate this path to nature in his now almost entirely lost master's dissertation <u>Philosophie der Physiologie</u> [Philosophy of Physiology]. Its main ideas were doubtless repeated, however, in the work <u>Über den Zusammendhang der tierischen Natur des Menschen mit seiner geistigen</u> [On the Connection between the Animal and the Spiritual Nature of Man] (1780), in which Schiller argues that the universe is a divine work of art and that man's destiny is enlightenment and

perfection.[5] He argues in his essays on the aesthetics of tragedy that what is most important in art is that the pleasure we take from the beautiful, pathetic, and sublime strengthens our moral sentiments, an idea that the Romantics would take up. More importantly for questions of Indian studies, however, is the fact that both the*Sturm und Drang* and their successors, the early Romantics, would find a path forward to nature in the work of Herder.

The atmosphere of Herder's youth was pious and he would eventually become, among other things, a Lutheran pastor. He spent much of his time in isolation reading such authors as Klopstock, Lessing, and Heinrich von Kleist (1777-1811), who he later said inspired in him nationalistic feelings. He was also influenced by his 20-year friendship with the pietist and mystic Johann Georg Hamann (1730-1788), whose interests reflected his background as a theologian, linguist, and historian. Hamann opened the way for Herder's study of folk poetry, the English language, Shakespeare, and most importantly, to the growth of his spirit of hostility toward the Enlightenment founded on a defense of emotion against reason.

All this is evident in Herder's Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit [Another Philosophy of History Concerning the Development of Mankind] (1774). In the work, he launched a bitter tirade against the idea of "cosmopolitanism," a term that would be appropriated by the Nazi regime, and provided the philosophical foundation of the *Sturm und Drang*, as much as there was one. He argued against the idea that civilization develops uniformly and insisted

that the *Volk* was the source of all truth, just as he had insisted in “Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache” [“Essay on the Origin of Language”] (1772) that human nature was the source of all language. The interpretation of such works would change during the course of the next century, in which Herder’s argument that national peoples had to be studied within their geographical and historical contexts would be erroneously interpreted as a “racial truth” used to justify discrimination.

As important as Hamann was to the formation of Herder’s ideas about nationality, Kant was a tremendous influence on Herder’s ideas about India. While studying theology at Königsberg between 1762 and 1764, Herder attended Kant’s lectures on philosophy, logic, mathematics, metaphysics, ethics, and physical geography. Caroline Herder stated in her Erinnerungen [Memoirs] (1820), that her husband enjoyed most of all Kant’s lectures on physical geography; this may account for much of his later interest in the physical environment, which he considered the chief factor in the development of national peculiarities.[6] Under Kant’s tutelage Herder read Leibniz, Newton, Locke, Hume and Rousseau, gleaning from them a keen sense of the divide between rationalism and spirituality, of which Hamann had already made him so aware. Herder was so taken by Kant’s ideas that he celebrated the philosopher in verse. Once, on reading one of Herder’s poems in the Königsberger Zeitung [Königsberg Times], Kant said that Herder would be a very useful man, once his “boiling genius ceased fermenting.”[7]

A much more staid man, Kant, perhaps ironically, would fuel Herder's "boiling" over the study of Himalayan cultures. Like several of the German anthropologists of the time, Kant shared one of Buffon's most essential views – the first society had arisen East of the Caspian Sea around 30,000 BC. Kant's imagination was captivated by this idea, which appeared in successive translations and travelers' tales, and he modified Bailly's popular astronomical theory by placing the origin of mankind in Tibet. Kant tried to connect Manichaeism with Hinduism by arguing that the Sanskrit mantra "O mani padme hum," the famous prayer for the end of all suffering, associated with the bodhisattva of compassion Avalokitesvara, was related to Mani's prayers for escape from embodiment.[8] He also equated Adam and Abraham with Adimo and Brahma, as Voltaire had before him. In his Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht abgefaßt [Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View] (1798), Kant argued that innate, natural character had its seat in the composition of human blood, and that therefore the mingling of stocks was not good for the human race. At the same time, as Kant was, nevertheless, an opponent of climatic determinism, he argued, along with Voltaire, that migrations of entire peoples have resulted in no change of character due to relocation. Though Kant merely rehashed the age-old prejudices of less sophisticated people in describing types of human beings, his anthropological impact – *à propos* the various relations of cognitive faculties and human types – should not to be underestimated. Anthropologist

Wilhelm E. Muhlmann, for example, even argues that Kant was in fact the founder of the modern concept of race.[9]

Kant's deep anthropological impact, however, was at first limited to a small number of thinkers, Herder most notable among them. Like Kant, Herder placed human origins in the Himalayas, as would many German thinkers until almost the end of the nineteenth century. While he was not alone in this view, however, Herder was perhaps more influential in introducing Indo-philia into the Germanic principalities and prompting the Romantics to seek out affiliations with India. Despite the fact that Herder was a devout Christian who considered the Bible to be the most accurate rendering of a primordial poetic revelation, he felt like Buffon that India was the home of such a revelation, and that its original form had been lost.

Herder's deep love affair with India was also greatly fuelled by his reading of Rousseau, through whom he became imbued with a love of the primitive, the natural, and the original, as well as a belief in an unalterable, authentic self.[10] From Rousseau, with Hamann's influence, Herder borrowed the idea of the artificiality of the culture of his age, and thereafter endeavored to bring his generation back to a life founded on the laws of nature as he conceived them. Rousseau's nature gospel was, in a sense, to become the foundation of Herder's idea of nationality. Herder conceived of man as distinctly more elevated than animals, however, and, unlike Rousseau, specifically excluded the ape from the species of man. While Rousseau's anthropology found man more independent than most other species, Herder, though

he separated humans out from other animals, ascribed dependency to nature. That is to say, as far as Herder was concerned it was the workings of nature that caused the formation of human groups.

Herder's anthropology would thus prove quite different from that of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries, for the central idea of his anthropological philosophy of history is that the aim of human nature comes with the spread of humanity. Herder's Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit [Outlines for a Philosophy of the History of Mankind] (1784-91), therefore, led a revolt ahead of its time against the "veterinary philosophy" of science and described as ignoble the very expression of human beings as a race.[11] Herder considered his Ideen the most important work of his life, and, though incomplete, it contains the fullest development of his idea of nationality as well as his complete philosophy of history. The book was widely read and made a great impression on its time. In her multi-volume portrait of Germany, De l'Allemagne [Of Germany] (1813), Germaine de Staël (1766-1817) understatedly refers to Herder's Ideen as "peut-être le livre allemand écrit avec le plus de charme" (Staël 311).[xxiii] More important than stylistic values like charm, however, Herder's publisher said of the Ideen that by the time fourth volume was issued the ideas of the first volumes were already so deeply ingrained in the minds of Germans that they were largely and frequently misappropriated.

[xxiii] Perhaps the German book written with the most charm.

In the Ideen, Herder rejects the genealogy of Germans that traces them to Japeth, in favor of the possibility of an ogygian Perso-Indian mountain region, as had Kant. Herder, like many empirical thinkers of the time, looked beyond the conventional Noachian genealogy and the idea of Adam as a common father, to the tradition that placed the origin of Europeans in the fabulous Orient.

> Alle Völker Europens, woher sind sie? Aus Asien. Von den meisten wissen wir's gewiß: wir kennen den Ursprung der Lappen, der Finnen, der Germanier und Goten, der Gallier, Slawen, Kelten, Cimbern u.f. Teils aus ihren Sprachen oder Sprachresten, teils aus Nachrichten ihrer alten Sitze können wir sie ziemlich weit ans Schwarze Meer oder in die Tatarei verfolgen, wo zum Teil noch ihre Sprachreste leben (Ideen 389).[xxiv]

Herder goes on to explain the gentleness of these original people: "Auf den tibetanischen Bergen herrscht die älteste Hierokratie der Erde, und die Kasten der Hindus verraten durch die eingewurzelte Macht, die dem sanftesten Volk seit Jahrtausenden zur Natur geworden ist, ihre uralte Einrichtung" (ibid. 395).[xxv] Herder avers that Western mythology is descended from earlier, Asian stories:

[xxiv] Whence are all the nations of Europe? From Asia. Of most of them we know this with certainty: we know the origin of the Laplanders, Finns, Germans and Goths, Gauls, Flavians, Celts, Cimbrians, and others. Partly from their languages, or the remains of their languages, and partly from accounts of their ancient feats, we can trace them to a considerable distance on the borders of the Black Sea, or in Tartary, where some remains of their languages still exist (Manuel 264).

> Alle Sagen der Europäer und Afrikaner (bei welchen ich immer Agypten ausnehme), noch mehr der Amerikaner und der westlichen Südsee-Inseln sind nichts als verlorne Bruchstücke junger Märchen gegen jene Riesengebäude alter Kosmogonien in Indien, Tibet, dem alten Chaldäa und selbst dem niedrigern Agypten: zerstreute Laute der verirreten Echo gegen die Stimme der asiatischen Urwelt, die sich in die Fabel verlieret" (ibid. 396).[xxvi]

Herder's praise for the primeval "citizens" of Asia seems limitless. He then turns to the work of Goguet as proof of the antiquity of Asian arts and sciences. It is in the area of language, however, that he points out the superiority of Asian thought over that of any other region. Herder makes no distinction between the Middle East and Far East, and thus extols the merits of Arabic as an Asian language:

> Ein unermeßlicher Reichtum von Begriffen geht z. B. in der fortgebildeten arabischen Sprache an wenige Wurzeln zusammen, so daß das Flickwerk der meisten europäischen Sprachen mit ihren unnützen Hülfsworten und langweiligen Flexionen sich nie mehr verrät, als wenn man sie mit den Sprachen Asiens vergleichet. Daher fallen diese auch, je älter sie sind, dem

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[xxv] The most ancient hierarchy upon Earth reigns on the mountains of Tibet: and the castes of the Hindoos indicate their primeval establishment, from the deep-rooted power, which has been for ages a second nature to the gentlest of people (ibid. 269).

[xxvi] All the mythologies of the Europeans and Africans, from whom I exclude the Egyptians, and still more of the Americans and inhabitants of the western islands of the Pacific Ocean, are but scattered fragments of ancient cosmogony in India, Tibet, the old Chaldea, and even in the much inferior Egypt; but confused sounds of an evanescent echo from the voice of the primitive Asiatic world, losing itself in fiction (ibid. 269).

> Europäer zu lernen schwer; denn er muß den nutzlosen Reichtum seiner Zunge aufgebenn und kommt in ihnen wie zu einer feindurchdachten, leisegeregelten Hieroglyphik der unsichtbaren Gedankensprache (ibid. 390-91).[xxvii]

Finally, after stating that writing itself was invented in Asia, Herder turns our attention to William Jones's commentary on Asian poetry (to be discussed later in this chapter) and points out that in the lofty poetry of Southern Asia, the more ancient it is, the more it displays divine nobility and simplicity. Herder thus finds Asia to be the seat of humanity's first civilization, its hierarchies, mythologies, languages, and forms of writing.

Herder constantly accentuates the word "humanity," but is vague when the time comes to define it, and to articulate how humanity would develop, however poorly he may have succeeded, was the great aim of his life.[12] As for Hamann, for Herder, humanity was too much a matter of feeling to be revealable through reason. For him, humanity seems to be, contrary to popular definition, that which is divine in man, and the purpose of human existence is the development of our highest characteristics. Herder argued that the individual could achieve the fullest

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[xxvii] In the polished Arabic language, for example, an infinite copiousness of ideas is composed from a few roots; so that the patchwork of most European languages, with their useless auxiliaries and tedious inflexions, cannot be more strikingly displayed, than by comparing them with the languages of Asia. Hence, too, these are difficult for a European to learn in proportion to their age; for he must relinquish the useless riches of his own tongue, when he approaches their finely conceived and deeply regulated hieroglyphic of the invisible language of thought (ibid. 265).

development and the most complete expression of his virtues and talents only as an integral part of a group – in particular, the national group. In the perfection of nationality, Herder saw the way to the perfection of both the individual and the collective. As opposed to Rousseau, who saw an insuperable barrier between nature and culture (which is why his "natural man" had to remain hypothetical), Herder saw no such barrier. He found the process of the development of culture to be the antithesis of the social contract, for nature and nation were synonymous.

In his philosophy of history he regarded each nationality as an organic unit whose constituent parts are made up of various branches of culture, which create in a regulated way according to the dictates of the national soul. For Herder,

> The national soul is the progenitor of all culture, and, conversely, all culture is but the expression of the national soul. Having a body of citizens and a set of national characteristics, the nation becomes a single being, an individuality, a personality. This being expresses itself in all the phenomena of its history: in its language, its literature, religion, custom, in art, science, and law. The sum of these varied expressions is the culture of a nationality (Ergang 84).

In contrast to Voltaire and Kant, Herder fell in line with Montesquieu and Winckelmann in constantly stressing the importance of physical environment, of climate on the development of cultural organisms, along with education, international intercourse, and heredity. Each nationality has something peculiarly characteristic about it, which to Herder was "inexpressible." He felt that poets write what and when

the national soul inspires them, not through labor outside the national group. The nationality speaks through them and they are its collective voice. The ineffable qualities that help us to differentiate between nations may be conceived of as the unity of a nation in the face of constant historical change. As for Buffon, for Herder the racial spirit belonging to the land and its people changed its forms according to the *Zeitgeist*, but a people always retained its immutable essence. After a period of growth, however, each national organism matures, makes its contribution to the general scheme of things, and then sinks into ossification, making way for others to pass through the same cycle.

Ergang argues that to Herder the history of mankind is a succession of national organisms, each revolving around its own center, each having its own national character, language, literature, art, religion, and society. What nationalities have in common is an inherent tendency to express themselves to the fullest extent of their possibilities, which can never be exhausted, for new possibilities are continually unfolding according to time and circumstance.[13] For Herder, the difference among cultures is not to be explained by the polygenism of men like Voltaire and the encyclopedists, for, according to Herder, all men originated in one and same race, as his research into the languages, customs, inventions and traditions of other nations appeared to prove to him. Herder was thus opposed to all attempts to divide mankind into races, for that would denote a difference of origin.

In Herder, one finds not just a mixture of Rousseau, Hamann, and Kant, but of fomenting ideas such as the relationship between geography and racial characteristics, the primacy of emotions over ratiocination, and a wider, spiritual humanity, originally linked to India. English and French thinkers of the period, however, such as Holwell or Sonnerat (to be treated below), while declaring that all ancient religions were of Indian origin, abstained from tracing their own national identities back to Indo-Aryans. These sorts of theories linking Germany to India, however, as well as pronouncements emphasizing Germany's superiority over its neighbors, would continue to proliferate at the end of the eighteenth century. Herder himself stayed within the universalist bounds of the Enlightenment, maintaining that all peoples, not merely Germans, should be encouraged to discover and develop their own capacities, warning, on the other hand, against the idea that Germans were a chosen nationality. What distinguishes human autonomy, so Herder argued, is its capacity for meaning, for which the use of language is crucial, and no rationalist account of language is adequate to capture that sense of meaning.

Herder's vision of a culturally unified German state was shared, developed, and misappropriated by others. In Von deutscher Baukunst [Of German Architecture] (1777), his contemporary, Goethe, elevated Gothic architecture, regarded contemptuously since the Renaissance, to a place of honor. Herder's pupil, Friedrich Gräter (1768-1830) began to emphasize virtues that he felt to be authentically German in Bragur, the Nordic review that he founded. In 1780, Prussian statesman

Ewald Friedrich von Hertzberg (1725-1795) read a paper at the Berlin Academy of Sciences on the reasons why the Germans were superior to the Romans, which sought to iterate the nationalistic convictions begun by the German humanists in late eighteenth-century terms.

Herder was also the precursor of figures such as idealist philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814), who regarded nationality as the product of an irresistible natural force ceaselessly at work molding the members of a group into a unit with coherent characteristics. Fichte's Reden an die deutsche Nation [Addresses to the German Nation] (1808) stressed the cultivation of native endowments in the face of the Napoleonic invasion. He would first, however, prove influential on the early Romantics because of his brand of transcendental idealism. His philosophy, like his politics, would bear the indirect influence of Herder.

II

Fichte and the Dangers of Subjectivity

In 1785, Herder became embroiled in a controversy over the supposed pantheism inherent in Spinoza's metaphysics. Herder maintained that Spinozism was theistic, his antagonist, Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi (1743-1819), that it was materialistic. The publication of Jacobi's Über die Lehre des Spinoza [On the Teaching of Spinoza] that year precipitated the debate, and also sparked a related argument with Judiac scholar Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786) over the alleged

pantheism of Lessing. The*Pantheismusstreit* ("Pantheism Controversy"), as it came to be called, focused attention generally on the apparent disjunction between human freedom and any systematic, philosophical interpretation of reality. Jacobi's work continued to ignite controversy in 1787 when, in the appendix to his David Hume über den Glauben, oder Idealismus und Realismus [David Hume on Belief, or Idealism and Realism], he scrutinized the new transcendental philosophy of Kant, and subjected Kant's remarks concerning things-in-themselves to devastating criticism. He observed that although one could not enter into critical philosophy without presupposing the existence of things-in-themselves, such a belief was incompatible with the tenets of that philosophy.

Jacobi's criticisms colored the efforts of post-Kantians – such as Karl Leonhard Reinhold (1758-1823), Gottlob Ernst Schulze (1761-1833), and Fichte – in working the kinks out of transcendental idealism. Fichte understands Kant as the latest contributor to the subjectivist strain of modern thought that had been initiated by Descartes and elaborated by Rousseau. Fichte was a proponent of a constantly evolving system of transcendental idealism, the *Wissenschaftslehre* ("Doctrine of Science," although the implication is that Fichte means all forms of knowledge), which played a key role in the development of post-Kantian philosophy. Inspired by Jacobi, Reinhold, and Schulze, Fichte rejected the "letter" of Kantianism and advanced a new, rigorously systematic presentation of what he took to be its "spirit" in the lectures and writings he produced while he was a professor at the University at

Jena between 1794 and 1799. By dispensing with Kant's things-in-themselves and by emphasizing the unity of theoretical and practical reason, Fichte sought to establish the unity of critical philosophy as well as of human experience. While Fichte was not interested in affiliations between the Germanic states and India, his extreme subjectivity, which borders on solipsism, contributes to a nineteenth-century tendency to see Hindu and Buddhist ideas as nihilistic.

Before Fichte, Reinhold and Schulze elaborate this direction of thought toward extreme subjectivity. Reinhold explains that a simple critique of reason is not enough; what is necessary is a system of reason that derives both theory and practice from one source. This system of reason was what Kant's successors tried to construct. Launching what it called an empirical attack on Kantianism in general and on Reinhold in particular, however, Schulze's anonymously published essay "Aenesidemus" proved to be devastating for Reinhold's philosophy and career. Schulze criticized the idea that things-in-themselves are the cause of representations as inconsistent with the rest of Kant and Reinhold's philosophies. His essay also argued that Reinhold's account of self-consciousness was infinitely regressive, for it required all consciousness to involve representations, since a self-conscious subject therefore had to have a representation of itself.

"Aenesidemus," also became the launching point for Fichte, who had thought of embarking on several different careers, including that of pastor, as had Herder. Enthralled with Kant, Fichte attempted to impress him with a short piece audaciously

entitled, "Versuch einer Kritik aller Offenbarung" ["Toward a Critique of All Revelation"] (1791). His publisher, purposefully or inadvertently, omitted Fichte's name and preface, leading readers to assume the author to be Kant himself; when the author was revealed to be Fichte, he became an instant celebrity. The Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung commissioned Fichte to write a review of "Aenesidemus," which appeared early in 1794. In the review, Fichte conceded to "Aenesidemus" that Reinhold could not make good on the basic claims of Kantian thought. He turned the tables on Schulze as well, however, by asking why we should assume that we must begin a discussion of Idealism with a "fact of consciousness," as Reinhold had called it, or any fact at all. "Allerdings müssen wir einen realen, und nicht bloß formalen, Grundsatz haben; aber in solcher muß nicht eben eine That*sache*, er kann auch eine That*handlung* ausdrücken" (Gesamtausgabe I, 2, 46).[xxviii] Fichte argued that the kind of philosophical science Reinhold was attempting to construct was not based on facts, but on norms, and therefore should be based on a fundamental mode of acting that serves as the basis for other norms. He felt that the kind of distinctions and relations that one is supposed to make according to Reinhold's philosophy should be conceived along more Kantian lines as basic acts of synthesis in accordance with normative rules.

[xxviii] We certainly do require a first principle, which is material and not merely formal. But such a principle does not have to express a *fact*; it can also express an *Act* (Breazeale 64). *Thathandlung* is Fichte's coinage, usually translated as *Act* with a capital *A*.

Fichte's philosophy created a dialogue with Jacobi's ideas; however, in an open letter to Fichte in 1799, Jacobi criticized transcendental idealism as "nihilism." As Gillespie notes, the term "nihilism" had already been applied to transcendental idealism in <u>Versuche über die Grundsätze der Metaphysik der Sitten des Herrn Prof. Kant</u> [Experiment on the Principle of Metaphysics in the Morals of Gentleman Prof. Kant] (1796), a critique by Lutheran minister Daniel Jenisch (1762-1804). A student of Hamann and Kant in Königsberg, Jenisch's accusation of nihilism was directed not at Kant or Fichte, but at more extreme Kantians who argued that things-in-themselves are beyond human cognition. Jacobi attempted to develop the term "nihilism" into a concept. As Gillespie quotes, Jacobi states in his letter to Fichte: "Wahrlich, mein lieber Fichte, es soll mich nicht verdrießen, wenn Sie, oder were es seh, Chimärismus nennen wollen, was ich dem Idealismus, den ich Nihilismus schelte, entgegensetze" (Jacobi iii 44).[xxix] According to Jacobi, idealism is the philosophy of mere appearances, like the world of the unenlightened figure in Plato's cave, and thus of nothing. Jacobi argued that in idealism, man has only the choice between God and nothing and, by choosing nothing, makes himself God. Jacobi thus makes the distinction between the recognition that God is outside man and the deification of man. His criticisms of reason and of science, in conjunction with those of Herder,

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[xxix] Truly, my dear Fichte, it should not grieve me, if you, or whoever it might be, want to call chimerism what I oppose to idealism, which I reproach as nihilism. "Chimerism" was how idealists characterized Jacobi's own philosophy of "non-knowing," feeling that in his system every decision was left up to individual inclination (cited in Gillespie 65).

would profoundly influence German Romanticism, fostering skepticism toward the empirically "proven." Near the end of his career, Jacobi entered bitter public controversies with Hegel and Friedrich Schelling (1775-1854) concerning the relationship between faith and knowledge.

Gillespie argues that one can see in Jacobi's critique of idealism the beginnings of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century ideal of nihilism, which he postulates as growing out of the notion of the infinite will that Fichte had located in the thought of Descartes and Kant. Fichte felt that the Enlightenment's varying concept of reason was inadequate to grasp the infinite essence of the embodied human spirit, and therefore attempted to demonstrate that one cannot understand subjective experience in the same way as one understands the objective world. Thus, for Fichte, the key problem to be solved in completing the system that Kant had begun was the problem of self-authorization – that is, the "Kantian paradox" of what it means to say that we are responsible only for acting in accordance with the norms that we ourselves authorize. Fichte concluded that the core distinction between subject and object was itself subjectively established; it was a subject-imposed distinction based on norms, as he felt Kant himself should have seen. For Fichte, Kant's dualism is unacceptable; reason must be a unity of the empirical "I" and the "Not-I," that is, both of the individual human subject and the objective world. Both of these, in Fichte's view, are expressions of the unhindered movement of the "absolute I," of an infinite will that is as essential to humanity as it is to divinity.

Fichte's philosophy was elaborated in the first version of his own system given as his initial lectures in Jena and published in 1794 as Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre ["Foundations of the Comprehensive Doctrine of Science"]. He considered his system to be a continual work in progress and was forever revising it, without feeling any responsibility to explain to his readers how and why it had changed. Thus, there are sixteen different of the *Wissenschaftslehre* in his collected writings, each differing from the other in crucial ways, and, as many have pointed out, almost anything one says in general about the *Wissenschaftslehre* as a whole can be countered with some contrary passage in one of the other versions. Much of the *Wissenschaftslehre* is an investigation of this dialectical reconciliation or mutual limitation of the "I" and the "Not-I." First, in response to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, Fichte considers the possibility that the "I"is limited by the "Not -I" – that is, that the objective world determines all of the structures of subjectivity. Then, in response to the Critique of Practical Reason, he examines the way in which the "Not-I" is limited and determined by the "I" – that is, the way in which the objective world is determined by subjectivity.

Fichte asserts that the subject comes into existence as it acts. That is to say that the subject has no "self," no thing that is responsible for it, until it institutes norms. Since normativity must involve doing something correctly or incorrectly, there must exist the possibility of either denying or affirming an assertion's correctness. Negation arises from recognizing what is normatively unacceptable, as

in works such as Werther and the youth movements they may engender. Fichte argues that everything that has been said to exist is merely "posited" by acting subjects who determine norms, and that what we ultimately believe to exist is determined by which set of inferences we find to be necessary to make most sense of our actions. Fichte's notion of positing is thus similar to the Cartesian notion of willing, and (as will emerge in chapter four) the idea of the *Wille* will come to be of prime importance for post-Kantian German philosophy.

Fichte's striving to demonstrate that the "Not-I" is an expression of the "absolute I" aims not merely at overcoming and subordinating the world but also at overcoming the empirical "I" of every individual.[14] This point will be taken up by his successors, such as Schelling, as an affirmation of the necessity to subordinate passions in an effort to integrate the personal absolute with the impersonal absolute, as is implied in Spinoza and Kant, and as is stated explicitly in the Bhagavad-Gita. Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* is thus not only a Cartesian effort to master nature, but also a Spinozistic and Rousseauian effort to transfigure human morality.

Since the time of Plato, the traditional rationalist solution to the problem of self-authorization had been to search for some object that was appropriate for rational insight. Fichte, however, felt Kant to have shown that no such object could be found, and therefore faulted Reinhold and Schulze for their misguided search for "facts of consciousness" in his review of "Aenesidimus." He proposed that only human beings' autonomy as subjectively authorizing beings could serve as such a basis.

That autonomy had to be understood, not as a basic metaphysical fact about an object beyond human cognition, but as a basic norm of human action, graspable only through an act of rational insight. Fichte would eventually conclude, however, that there is no way of reconciling the "I" and the "Not-I," and thus took the fatal step of eliminating the "Not-I" altogether. In the thought of Fichte, one sees the move away from the coexistence of humanity and nature or divinity, toward the assertion of human freedom as absolute, and the consequent demand that the objective world be annihilated. Fichte identifies the noumenal realm with that of the will, felt both on the level of recognizable emotions and on the more subconscious level of instincts. The subject strives to subordinate the objective within itself in an effort to attain absolute being. "The I thus consists in two mutually necessary motions, a centrifugal motion that aims at the infinite and a centripetal motion that returns to the I" (Gillespie 90). What are of prime importance for the Romantics about Fichte's conception of will is that its goal is absolute liberation and that its primordial character is longing for this liberation. The same longing for liberation is a key element in the medieval Hindu dramas <u>Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam</u> and the <u>Gitagovinda</u> that would so enthrall the early Romantics.

Fichte radicalized this notion of the will in a way that would have been unacceptable to both Descartes and Kant, transforming the emphasis on the subject into a world creating will. This radicalization led thinking away from the bright dawn of Enlightenment that these thinkers had proclaimed and into what Gillespie calls "the

dark night of the noumenal I" and the nihilism that so alarmed Jacobi. In the end, Fichte rejects the Enlightenment notion of reason in favor of an absolute subjectivism that attempts to derive all reason from the infinite will of the "absolute I." Fichtean idealism can thus be seen as a source of the "nihilism" that would become increasingly explicit in the nineteenth century, particularly when combined with Romantic interpretations of Sanskrit literature.

III

Jones Discovers the Original Language

While Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* may indeed prove a key source of many of the tendencies that will develop into the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century ideals of nihilism, it is the application of the seeds of subjectivity and rebellion planted by the *Sturm und Drang* and post-Kantian idealism to the study of Sanskrit literature that is to prove decisive in transforming the materialism alleviating philosophies of India into systems of negation in the minds of some German thinkers. The rise to prominence of the Indian model of European origin would be aided by neo-Hellenism, for as this took hold in Germany, ancient Egyptian culture came to be seen, negatively, as African. The shift would contribute to the replacement of the Judeo-Egyptian model of European ancestry in the last quarter of the eighteenth century with the Indian model, as the importance of blood and language eclipsed that of the transmission of philosophical and scientific reason. Another major

contributing factor was the arrival in Europe of texts translated from Sanskrit. The period between 1750 to 1830 saw the rise of the comparative study of religion, a great expansion in archeology performed by Europeans abroad, and the explosion of the modern science of philology. This influx of new sources and the diffusion of knowledge of Indian religious literature in Europe would be described in 1803 by Friedrich Schlegel as the Second Renaissance – an "*orientalisches Renaissance*."

The translation of Indian religious literature into European languages began with Anquetil-Duperron, who arrived in India in 1754. It took more than twenty years, however, before this traveler and lauded orientalist published his translations from Sanskrit.[15] Anquetil-Duperron first received attention in 1771, when he set before the public his translation Zend-Avesta, Ouvrage de Zoroastre. The translation ignited a revolution in the study of language, for, not only did the translation lay the foundation of comparative philology, it was also the first European translation of a religious text not to take the biblical scriptures as its point of departure.[16] Like Herodotus, Anquetil-Duperron used the term "Aryan" to designate a people who descended into the subcontinent from Persia. Less sensational than his translation of the Zend-Avesta, but perhaps more crucial for the purposes of this study for it would greatly influence the German Romantics, was Anquetil-Duperron's subsequent translation of the Hindu Upanishads into Latin in 1804.[17]

The Upanishads were first translated from Sanskrit into Persian by, or possibly for, Dara Shukoh (1615-1659), the eldest son of Shah Jehan, a progressive prince who

openly professed the liberal religious tenets of the great Emperor Akbar, and attempted to reconcile the religious doctrines of Hinduism and Islam.[18] Dara Shukoh seems first to have heard of the Upanishads during his stay in Kashmir in 1640. He afterwards invited several pandits from Benares to Delhi, who were to assist him in the work of translation, which was finished in 1657. Once the Upanishads had been translated from Sanskrit into Persian, at that time the most widely read language of the East and understood likewise by many European scholars, they became generally accessible to those who took an interest in the religious literature of India. Under Akbar's reign (1556-1586) similar translations had been prepared, but neither those nor the translations of Dara Shukoh attracted the attention of European scholars until 1775, when Anquetil-Duperron received a manuscript of the Persian translation of the Upanishads from the naturalist and astronomer Le Gentil de la Galasière, a French resident at the court of vizier Shuja ud daula. After obtaining a second Persian manuscript of the work, Anquetil-Duperron collated the two, and translated the Persian translation into Latin and into French, the latter of which was not published. The Latin translation was published in 1801-02, under the cumbersome title Oupnek'hat, id est, Secretum tegendum: opus ipsa in India rarissimum, continens antiquam et arcanam, seu theologicam et philosophicam doctrinam, e quatuor sacris Indorum libris Rak baid, Djedjer baid, Sam baid, Athrban baid excerptam; ad verbum, e Persico idiomate, Samkreticis vocabulis intermixto, in Latinum conversum: Dissertationibus et Annotationibus difficiliora explanantibus, illustratum: studio et

opera Anquetil Duperron, Indicopleustæ. Argentorati, typis et impensis fratrum Levrault. In the notes to Oupnek'hat (the title by which is it more commonly referred), Anquetil-Duperron compared the Upanishads to the system of Kant, for he understood the text as attributing all material things to *Dinge an sich*. The philosophy of the Upanishads would until the 1930s be attributed to the so-called "Aryans." Anquetil-Duperron's re-using of the term "Aryan," however, which, as mentioned, derives from the Sanskrit word *arya* meaning "noble," would eventually give it connotations that have little to do with the Upanishads.

There were dozens of other influential travelers to India in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Le Gentil, who journeyed there in 1760 and published the fruits of his eight years of research there in 1779, managed to capture the attention of Voltaire, among others. He was the first traveler to the French territories of Asia to present a consistent account of Hindu astronomy and to realize the extent to which Gautama Buddha was worshipped there. While Le Gentil thought that Indian art deserved more respect from Europeans – he felt it was at least as antique as the art of the Egyptians – both he and Anquetil-Duperron remarked on the similarity of Gothic and Indian architecture and statuary in what Le Gentil calls their lack of design and in the presence of figures in three-quarter relief he describes as funerary and barbaric.

The role of mythology in the transition from the Enlightenment to Romanticism is vital; initial European visitors to India, however, were ignorant about Hindu mythologies and this led them to put forward fantastic suggestions that Mitter

argues grew out of the tradition of considering Hindu deities as monsters.[19] To be sure, Hindu and Buddhist iconography is complex and, considering these limitations, some European accounts, such as that of Carsten Niebuhr (1733-1815), were not so wildly off the mark. Niebuhr was the only survivor of a scientific expedition to the East Indies sponsored by the Danish court and the University at Göttingen. His Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und andern umliegenden Ländern [Description of Travels in Arabia and Other Surrounding Lands] (1774-78) supported Le Gentil's claims that India possessed a culture as extensive and ancient as that of Egypt. Niebuhr studied the historical backgrounds of the three major Indian faiths – Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism[20] – all of which had certain affinities as well as differences, in an effort to understand their mythologies more fully. Niebuhr placed the sculptures of the caves at Elephanta on a scale of value acceptable to Europeans of the time – they were not as beautiful as Greek and Romans statues, but far superior in design to Egyptians ones.

A few years later, celebrated traveler and natural historian Pierre Sonnerat (1745-1814) published one of the most detailed and profusely illustrated accounts of Hindu religion and mythology, Voyage aux Indes Orientales (1782). An early and fervent believer that ancient Indian civilization was the cradle of humanity and in the diffusionistic origins of religion, Sonnerat had a tremendous impact on his generation in France. Just as neo-Hellenist art historians like Winckelmann had strongly linked Greek art with Greek social ideas, Sonnerat's view of Indian art was colored by his

view of contemporary Indian society. While Winckelmann was overwhelmingly positive about Greek achievements, however, Sonnerat was mostly negative about Indian ones. He felt that in India, and in Asia generally, the arts had made little or no progress since the early centuries of their existence because of an enervating climate, innate conservatism, and the repression of despotic governments.

Other travelers, though, particularly English ones, found that the statuary in the Indian cave temples depicted a range of emotion rarely found in classical European sculpture. The growing interest in the aesthetics of the colossal – essential ingredients in Burke's conception of the sublime – drew fresh attention to the temples. On a visit to the Elephanta caves in the early 1780s, surgeon and orientalist William Hunter (1719-1783?) was struck by the representations in Indian statuary of the effects of emotions on the human physiognomy. As Mitter points out, traditionally Indian aesthetics attaches a great deal of importance to the role of a wide range of emotions and their treatment in literature and art.[21] Hunter's praise of Indian sculpture to the Society of Antiquaries of London, in a paper on the "Artificial Caverns in the Neighbourhood of Bombay" (1784), was indicative of the way Indian sculpture was viewed in this period. English Romanticism stressed the successful delineation of emotions as the prime criterion of its art criticism, and Hunter lauded Hindu sculpture for its ability to do this. Hunter also argued that there was an evolution to be witnessed in Indian art, reminiscent of the much-discussed doctrine of the "evolutionary" principle of development from the simple to the complex.[22]

The Society of Antiquaries, in existence to this day, had been founded in 1707 aiming at "the encouragement, advancement, and furtherance of the study and knowledge of the antiquities and history of this and other countries."[23] Already by the 1780s, however, the essential function of the Society in disseminating the knowledge of Indian antiquities in Europe was made redundant by the establishment of the Asiatick Society. The work of visionary William Jones, later knighted for his efforts, it was founded in 1784, the year after his arrival in India (and was renamed the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1835). Jones, who himself was Romantic by temperament and sensibility, as is evident in his translations of Indian poetry that so impressed Herder, would eventually and rightfully have a profound influence on the German Romantic movement.

Jones had begun his scholarly career in 1768 when he was asked to translate a Persian manuscript, a life of Nadir Shah, brought to England by King Christian VII of Denmark. Having passed the Bar in 1774, he was given the opportunity to travel to India four years later when he was offered a seat on the bench of the newly established Supreme Court in Bengal, although he did not end up leaving for India until 1783. Two of Jones's acquaintances from Oxford, Charles Wilkins (1750-1833) and Nathaniel Halhed (1751-1830), were working in India as clerks for the Bengal Establishment of the East India Company. Like Jones, they too had studied Persian, but had recently hand-cast a Bengali typeface. Halhed then wrote and Wilkins published the first printed Indian language book, Grammar of the Bengali Language

(1778). Before this, Brahmin pandits had rebuffed the two enterprising orientalists when they enquired into the sacred Hindu texts to which only Brahmins were privy. Although the keeping of these Sanskrit texts, purported to be in the language of the gods, was their sacred duty and the seat of their power as a class, the pandits' secrecy dissolved with their approval of Wilkins's press.[24]

When Jones arrived in India, Wilkins was working on a new project, a translation of a section of a Sanskrit epic said to be many times longer than Homer's Iliad.[25] Jones himself believed that there must exist close analogies between Greco-Latin and Hindu mythology, as had been postulated between Dionysus and Shiva since the time of Megasthenes' Indica. The epic from which Wilkins was translating was the Mahabharata, and the extract the Bhagavad-Gita.[26] East India Company Governor-General Warren Hastings said of Wilkins translation that it was "of a theology accurately corresponding with that of the Christian disposition, and most powerfully illustrating its fundamental doctrines" (Allen 59), referring to the belief among many orientalists that the Hindu *trimurti* corresponded directly to the Christian trinity. Wilkins was also the first to identify Bodh-Gaya as the place where Gautama Buddha is reputed to have achieved enlightenment. In 1785, ill health had required Wilkins to return to England, but Jones succeeded in getting a retired Hindu physician, Pandit Ramlochan Cantaberna, to teach him Sanskrit. Under Cantaberna's tutelage, Jones learned Sanskrit so well that

> by February 1786 he was able to stand up before a meeting of the Asiatick Society and declare [in his famous "Third Anniversary Discourse"] the Sanskrit language to be 'of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either.' Furthermore, he had made a remarkable discovery: that Sanskrit had an obvious kinship with Greek and Latin. Not only was there a common vocabulary for many words, most strikingly in numerals and such nouns of common relationship as the word mother (in Sanskrit *mata*, in Latin *mater*, in Greek *mêtêr*), but all three languages shared the same system of grammar, the conjugation of verbs and nouns being distinguished by the characteristic features of gender, singular and plural, and declension. In sum, Sanskrit bore to Latin and Greek 'a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs, and in the forms of grammar, than can possibly have been produced by accident; so strong, indeed, that no philologist could examine all three without believing them to have sprung from some common source.' There was a similar reason for supposing that 'both the Gothick and Celtick, though blended with a different idiom, had the same origin with Sanscrit; and the old Persian might be added to the same family' (ibid. 62-63).

The relationship between different European and Asiatic words had attracted attention ever since India had become more readily accessible to Europeans. The Italian traveler, Filippo Sassetti, had remarked upon it in 1587 and a French Jesuit,

Père Coeurdoux, devoted a long treatise to the question in 1767.[27] Jones himself believed that the first post-diluvian human race was Perso-Indian, and spoke Sanskrit, and that the Egyptians, Ethiopians, Greeks, Romans, and Goths originally spoke the same language. In line with the Noachian genealogy that still proved fundamental for many scholars, he went on to argue that these groups professed the same faith that derived from the common Edenic origin, finding the pre-Christian gods of Greece and Rome directly related to Hindu gods: Chronos was Brahma, Demeter was Vishnu, Zeus was Shiva, and so on. As regards mythology and religion Jones was a diffusionist, arguing in his article "On the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India" (1785) that "Ethiopia and Hindustan were peopled or colonized by the same extraordinary race" (Stockdale and Walker III, 52).[28] It would be significant to the nineteenth century that, in the late eighteenth, the classical god most frequently identified with Shiva was Dionysus. On the one hand, this was due to the almost exclusive use by the antiquarians of the Neo-Platonic treatises of late antiquity as the foundations of their philosophical ideas. In these works, Bacchus was the supreme deity, as he had been in both Orphic and Dionysian mysteries. The popular ancient account of the Indian journey of Dionysus easily lent itself to such an interpretation of Hindu gods.

Jones not only found, or thought that he had found, the roots of classical Western mythology in Hinduism, but those of Christianity as well. He came to believe that Hinduism was the original common religion, even going so far as to say that "in England it is obvious: Stonehenge is evidently one of the temples of

Boodh."[29] Francis Wilford, an East India Company Lieutenant of Engineers who became the third European to learn Sanskrit, would continue Jones's work and "prove" that Manu, the son of Brahma, was not Adima or Adam, as Jones had suspected, but Noah. Jones's tragic death in 1794, at the age of 47, from a misdiagnosed tumor, robbed British Indian Studies of its leading mind in its formative period. Nevertheless, Jones is generally credited for his formulation of the Indo-European language family that laid the foundations for the field of comparative philology, the establishment of the Asiatick Society as the cornerstone of Indian studies, and the translation of major Sanskrit texts, including the Manu-Samhita, Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam, the Hitopadesha and the Gitagovinda.[30] He also was the first to establish a mid-point in Indian history from which other events could be charted: the reign of Chandragupta Maurya (c.322-c.298 BC), the king "Sandrokottos" of whom Megasthenes had told.

Jones's contributions to art history, however, seem less significant than those to philology. He was an exponent of the evolutionary principle in art and held a deep appreciation for early Indian architecture and sculpture. These two instances led Jones to condemn the whole development of Hindu art as a corruption of earlier forms, in contrast to Hunter. Jones saw what he thought to be the older and simpler forms as preferable. This was to a large extent in keeping with an emerging Romantic consciousness among educated people in Germany, which emphasized the simplicity of classical Greek and Gothic art over the supposed complexity of the

Roman, as is evident in Winckelmann's praise of the Doric forms at Paestum. Another impetus to the rise of archeology abroad would thus come from Romanticism. As costly journeys to distant lands lay beyond the means of most people, however, more attention began to be paid to local antiquities. As with the German notion of the "migration of peoples" rather than the "barbarian invasions," however, Germans themselves were fuelling a revival of interest in Gothic architecture and German mythology, as the emphasis on Germanic culture and values became more popular, as noted above in reference to Goethe's Von deutscher Baukunst. The accounts of Frenchmen like Le Gentil point indirectly to the low esteem in which the Gothic was generally held outside Germany.

Concurrently, the Bhagavad-Gita, published by Jones in Calcutta in 1788, was igniting a fascination with India among certain – primarily young– German thinkers and writers, including the *Sturm and Drang* writers and the early Romantics. In terms of interest in these texts *vis-à-vis* specifically German issues, Schwab says of the Bhagavad-Gita's impact on Germany that "nul texte plus irréstiblement que celui-là, par sa profondeur métaphysique, par le prestige aussi de son enveloppe poétique, ne pouvait rompre une dure tradition de race supérieure" (Schwab 174).[xxx] French politician Jean Denis Lanjuinais (1753-1827) wrote,

> On fut étonné de trouver, dans ces fragments d'un très ancien poème épique de l'Inde, avec le système de la métempsycoce, une brillante théorie de

[xxx] No text could, by its profound metaphysics and by the prestige of its poetic casing, more irresistibly shake the hold of the tradition of a superior race.

> l'existence de Dieu et de l'immortalité de l'âme, tout le sublime de la doctrine des stoïciens, l'amour pur qui égara Fénelon, et un panthéisme tout spirituel, enfin la vision de tout en Dieu soutenue par le P. Malebranche (ibid.).[xxxi]

Jones translated the Gitagovinda the following year precisely to illustrate his thesis about the proximity of Indic and Pythagorean metempsychosis and of Hindu and Platonic mythology. This lead some readers to find India to be the original home of the philosophies of Spinoza and George Berkeley (1685-1753), the latter of whom developed an idealist metaphysical system that he felt safeguarded against skepticism. The impact of these revelations would be strengthened by the subsequent publication of the Upanishads in 1804. Both Goethe and Herder had been seduced by the link with India when Kalidasa's fourth- or fifth-century Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam appeared in a 1791 translation by ethnologist Georg Forster (1754-1794). Jones's translation of the play greatly impressed Goethe and had even inspired Schubert to write an opera based on it. The initial published translations of the British and French India scholars would thus emerge as follows: Wilkins' Bhagvat-Geeta (1785) and Hitopadesha (1787); Jones' Gitagovinda (1789), Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam (1789), and Manu-Samhita (1794); and Anquetil-Duperron's Oupnek'hat (1801-02) and Upanishads (1804).

[xxxi] It was a great surprise to find among these fragments of an extremely ancient epic poem from India, along with the system of metempsychosis, a brilliant theory on the existence of God and the immortality of the soul, all the sublime doctrines of the Stoics, the pure lobe which bewildered Fénelon, a completely spiritual pantheism, and finally the vision of all-in-God, upheld by Malebranche.

It is worth noting that the conception of India as the ancestress of all Europeans did not, however, recommend itself greatly to the British, who tended not to think of themselves as particularly Germanic in the first place. The classic contempt for the "native," that of the colonizer of an indigenous people, was certainly responsible for the unpopularity of the Indian affiliation, and Schwab even cites Kipling as evidence of a certain Indo-phobia on the part of the British. When reviewing the "new genealogies," in the case of the English, a link could be found between the national attachment to the Bible and the scientific caution of such writers as Locke or Newton. This devotion to the Bible, which was just as lively in Victorian times and came to be known as "bibliolatry," led to disapproval of such ideas or research as were thought to be overbold.

Nevertheless, many saw Jones as providing linguistic "evidence" that Germany and India were intrinsically linked in a nebulous ancient past. The idealism of Fichte provided a solipsistic rationalization of all behavior, opening the way for the justification of the most violent racial discrimination. The nationalism of Herder provided the theory that a nation is driven in all respects by its own national spirit whose contributions to world history and culture are governed only by one other factor: the cycles of history. These three intellectual developments are perhaps the most crucial precursors to the revolution that would come to be called German Romanticism.

Chapter 3

FEAR OF INFINITY

"Ah Pythagoras *metem su cossis* were that true, This soule

should flie from me, and I be changde Vnto some brutish beast."

– Christopher Marlowe, Doctor Faustus (1604)

I

Novalis' Hymns to Shiva

Young intellectuals throughout Europe enthusiastically greeted the French overthrow of absolutism in 1789, for the political upheaval seemed to provide, among other things, for an additional stimulus to accelerate the ongoing drive toward emancipation from all conventional rules in the arts. This change, which had begun in Britain and France in the thirty years prior to the French Revolution, would come to be called Romanticism. Gerhard Hoffmeister notes, "symptomatic of the Western European interconnection in this slowly gathering trend is the etymology of 'Romantic'" (Hoffmeister 2).

> French provided the etymological root – *romanz* (c.1150), referring to the people's "vulgar" language and literature as opposed to the erudite use of Latin; English developed "Romantick" in the sense of "invented, fictitious" (1650), applying it to romances first, then to picturesque scenery and nature; German transferred *romantisch* (1698) to literary criticism, thereby gradually

> freeing it from its pejorative connotation of uncouth and barbaric – both in style and motifs – as opposed to refined classicism. This change in meaning was accomplished by 1800, when *Romantik* could still refer to *Romankunst* (the art of novel-writing), yet eventually it embraced much more than that (ibid.).

By 1789, the political and aesthetic future suddenly ceased to be distant. Many German critics and poets agreed that mechanical rules, such as the Aristotelian unities in drama – one plot, one location, one 24-hour period – which the Elizabethans had cast aside in the late sixteenth century, stifled creativity. The emancipatory ideas of the French Revolution would give German literature the impetus it needed to develop new forms for new concerns. The Early German Romantics' subsequent rejection of Robespierre's terror that would follow the revolution did not distract them from their task of regenerating literature, society, and religion. Another influence on the core convictions and poetic manifestations of the Romantic movement – after the influences of the *Sturm und Drang*, Fichtean idealism, and developments in Indian studies – were the political events of the period: the French Revolution and its ideals, Napoleon's conquest of Germany (1806), and his fall from power as certified at the Congress of Vienna (1815).

Romanticism in Germany has usually been divided into the three phases of *Früh-* (1798-1804), *Hoch-* (1805-1815), and *Spätromantik* (1816-1850). *Frühromantik* can be understood broadly as having grown out of the *Sturm und*

Drang (1767-86) and *Weimarer Hochklassik* (1794-1805) of Goethe and Schiller, and Kantian transcendental idealism, as elaborated by Fichte, and the introduction into Germany of the work of the French and English scholars of India. It is Romanticism in its initial, rather than in its two later stages, that more directly concerns this study, for early Romaniticsm would be directly influenced by, and become a part of, the rise of German orientalism. *Frühromantik* flourished among university students who gathered together in small groups in order to philosophize and write poetry together. The prolific philosopher-poet and novelist, Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853) and Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenröder (1773-98), who would promulgate a conception of the unity of art and religion, formed the first such group in Berlin, at that time still the center of *Aufklärung*. A second group of compatriots, united by their contempt for the bankruptcy they found in eighteenth-century rationalism, gathered around Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829), including his brother August Wilhelm Schlegel (1767-1845) and the well-connected Thuringian baron Friedrich von Hardenberg (1772-1801), known by his pen name Novalis, whose work emphasized the primacy of the poet in both government and religion. They met in Jena, then Berlin, and then Jena again – where most of them would study under Fichte – with their intellectual friendship culminating in the so-called *Jenenser Romantische Schule* [Jena Romantic School]. In this brief period the Schlegel brothers along with their female counterparts – August Wilhelm's wife, Caroline, and Friedrich's mistress, Dorothea – and their friends Tieck, Novalis, the philosopher F. W. J. Schelling (1775-1854), and the

theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), turned Jena into the intellectually buzzing locus of the fledgling movement. Centered at August Wilhelm's home, they presented the first definitions and programs of Romantic poetry in their periodical *Athenäum* (1798-1800) and promoted the *Frühromantik* novels Lucinde by Friedrich Schlegel (1799) and Heinrich von Ofterdingen by Novalis (1802). From here, they also embarked on the first of the group's many translations, beginning with A. W. Schlegel and Tieck's Shakespeare-translation project from 1797 onwards.

Enamored with Herder and Goethe and hoping to befriend Schiller, the Schlegels soon alienated the latter with unfavorable reviews of his periodicals. Schiller's poetry, criticism, discussions of Kantianism, and his notion that beauty was crucial to the cultivation of the moral life were nevertheless very influential on the Jena School. According to Schiller, only beauty could evince the necessary harmony between sensibility and reason that can provide us with the crucial motivation to live moral lives. Schiller had given expression to a veritable cult of youth through the achievement of lasting individual fame by the time he had reached his early twenties. A great preoccupation of the young Romantics, thus had to do with their intense need to develop and express their individuality. An overwhelming conformity in German society at the time suppressed any such thing, although the period does see the distancing of the young from the authority of the ruling patriarch. Their religious faith, along with ideas coming in from France and Britain that broke with the decorum of Neoclassical literature in the works of writers such as Rousseau and

Wordsworth, only intensified their belief that they had been suppressing their erotic or amorous feelings only so as not to violate anachronistic, unjustifiable social precepts. At the same time, their alienation was underlined by what they perceived to be crudeness in both courtly and popular German culture of the time, which was so concerned with restraint and balance, as compared to the emerging, more radically emotional tendencies of contemporary British and French literature.

Philosophically, their thought was at least initially an outgrowth of Fichte's idealism. Descartes' conception of the self-certainty of consciousness, empiricism's notion of an infinite natural causality, and Kant's assertion of practical rationality all constrained the power and scope of divine will and irrationality. Although the "Kantian paradox" never played the role for the early Romantics that it did for Fichte, it certainly provided a backdrop to their works and thoughts, and many of the ideas found in their writings are expressions of it. The absolute subject that Fichte established, on the other hand, did seem to embody the infinite and endow it with more power. Alienated from the strictly moralistic society around them, the early Romantics found that Fichte's emphasis on human spontaneity, on our ability to give objects meaning by bestowing some kind of status on them, expressed their own need to re-make the world of their parents from which they felt so estranged.

Fichte's influence was important for this group for they took a good part of their inspiration from him, although many scholars have pointed out that this can be overestimated, for they hardly became Fichteans.[1] Fichte's argument that the subject

posits the object seemed to put too much emphasis on human beings' role as creator and not enough on responding to experience. The most basic component of their aspirations and work centered around the apparent disjunction between spontaneous creativity and responsiveness to the world as it is, and, more important, how to integrate the unity of those two things into Kant's idea in the Kritik der Urteilskraft [Critique of Judgment] (1790) that human beings are part of a unity of nature. It is this lowering of the rank of nature – and, by association, spirituality – in Fichte's philosophy that made it so inadequate for the *Frühromantik*, because they were also looking for communion with greater forces outside man.

What is missing in Fichte, the communion of man with nature and the grounding of nature in some cosmic spiritual principle, they found in Spinoza, who offers union with a cosmic substance. Friedrich Schlegel writes that idealism is only a first, effecting impetus and the beginning of intellectual development, alteration, and re-birth: it must be unified at a higher level by "*wissenschaftliche Fantasie*" [scientific fantasy] which is best represented by Spinoza's system.[2] He goes on to add, however, that an alternative to Spinoza must be elicited to facilitate the philosophical reinvigoration of beauty and *Bildung* [educational and cultural formation]. That alternative lies in other, non-Western mytholgies.[3] Schlegel recognized that Spinoza's and Fichte's systems were weakened for reasons that oppose each other: in Spinozism finite subjectivity seemed to vanish completely, in Fichtean idealism objectivity appears to be, at least theoretically, abandoned. The

task was to find an ontological foundation for the unity of freedom and nature in a marriage of subjectivity and metaphysics.

Following Rousseau, Wordsworth, and the *Sturm und Drang*, the Jena Romantics came to see this communion as something to be realized through art in a sort of poetry of cosmic spirit, in which men are united with both their own creative expression and the universe itself, and this took them to attempted syntheses of Fichte and other thinkers. Friedrich Schlegel would attempt to synthesize ideas of Fichte and Goethe through a philologically informed critique, and Schleiermacher to combine Kant and Spinoza in a kind of "critical realism," but it would be Schelling who would unite the radical philosophical notion of creative subjectivity with his own poetic vision of nature. These attempts at synthesis would be depicted in the fictional protagonists of early Romanticsism and in some of the philosophical reactions to Fichte. Inspired by heroes such as Goethe's Faust and Wilhelm Meister, on the one hand, and by the figures in medieval Hindu literature, such as Dushyanta in Kalidasa's Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam, on the other, one sees the creation of the first German Romantic heroes and the first creative mantfestations of Romantic views on idealism. The forces of destruction epitomized by Werther are to be found in Novalis' narrator in Hymnen an die Nacht [Hymns to the Night] (1799-1800). The forces of restoration may be seen in Schelling's inspiration drawn from Jayadeva's Gitagovinda. Novalis, Schelling, and Schlegel found in these texts a Hindu

conception of the Supreme Being that sounded, familiarly, like a more ancient, more naïve Spinoza.

This chapter deals primarily with five Sanskrit texts that profoundly effected Novalis, Schelling, and Schlegel. The first section, on Novalis' Hymnen an die Nacht, will discuss the influence of Kalidasa's Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam, in which Shiva is worshipped. Section two, on the philosophy of Schelling, will address the impact of the Gitagovinda, which draws on the Bhagavad-Gita – both texts of the Vaishnavic tradition. The last section, on Friedrich Schlegel's Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier, will look at the Puranas, which draw on the Upanishads – texts which include both Shaivic and Vaishnavic thought.[4]

The Jena Romantics had first encountered the works of India scholars through Friedrich Majer (1771-1818), a lecturer at Jena who, influenced by Herder's ideas about India, had become the chief purveyor of Indian knowledge in the Germanic states. A friend of Schleiermacher and Schelling, Majer greatly impressed Schiller, Novalis, and Friedrich Schlegel. He took up Herder's theory of India as the source of the human race in his Zur Kulturgeschichte der Völker [On the Cultural History of Peoples] (1798). His first study of Hindu mythology, "Über die mythologischen Dichtungen der Indier," [On the Mythological Stories of the Indians] was printed in Tieck's Poetisches Journal [Poetic Journal] in 1800, and the whole of the Jena circle, with differing degrees of intensity, became fascinated by it. His influence was felt as much through his retranslations as through his theories; his complete Bhagavad-Gita

and Gitagovinda produced a tremendous effect on Romantic circles when they were published in 1802 in the Asiatisches Magazin [Asiatic Magazine] that the Orientalist and traveller Heinrich Julius Klaproth (1783-1835) had begun to edit at Weimar.

On the advice of his Sanskrit teacher, Pandit Ramlochan Cantaberna, William Jones had translated the most widely known Hindu drama, the third and most famous play by Kalidasa (c.353-420), Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam, literally "Shakuntala Recognized," the first complete Sanskrit text translated into English without a Persian intermediary. Jones first translated the text into Latin, "which bears so great a resemblance to Sanskrit, that it is more convenient than any other modern language for the scrupulous interlineary version" (a version that has since been lost). He then rendered it "word for word" into English, "without suppressing any material sentence," "disengaged it from the stiffness of a foreign idiom, and prepared the faithful translation" (Stockdale and Walker VII, 7). Jones's Shakuntala was published in 1791 and Europe was enthralled.

The English translation of the text was followed by Georg Forster's German version that same year. It is Forster's Sakontala that evoked the often-quoted admiration of Goethe in his Deutsche Monatsschrift [German Monthly Journal] (1791):

> Will ich die Blumen des Fruehen, die Fruechte des spaeteren Jahres,
>
> Will ich was reizt und entzuecht, will ich was saettigt und naehrt,
>
> Will ich den Himmel, die Erde mit einem Namen begreifen;

Nenn ich Sakontala dich und so ist alles gesagt.[xxxii]

After Forster sent Herder his own translation of Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam, Herder wrote back to him that the play was a masterpiece of the kind that appears only once every two thousand years. Herder's study of Sakontala inspired him to write a lengthy essay on it that he included in his Zerstreute Blätter [Scattered Leaves] (1785-1793), as a new model in dramaturgy, challenging the standard use of Aristotelian dramatic theory to evaluate dramatic works.

While Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam is not the first of Kalidasa's plays to treat the heroine Shakuntala, it is commonly considered his most fully realized work. The story is based on a tale in the Mahabharata and is as follows: King Dushyanta of the Puru dynasty, while on a hunting expedition, meets the hermit girl Shakuntala, whose mother was a nymph. They fall in love and, in the absence of her father – a hermit who is away on pilgrimage – marry using a Hindu ceremony known as *Ghandharva*, in which a man and a woman can marry due to mutual consent with nature (embodied in a deity or not) as their witness. After consummating their vows, Dushyanta must return to his palace and promises to send an envoy to escort Shakuntala there. As a symbolic gesture he gives her a signet ring. When the irascible hermit, Durvasa, stops by her hut, Shakuntala, in her marital bliss, does not hear his calls. The ill-tempered sage places a curse on her so that she will not be remembered by anyone

[xxxii] If I want the flowers of spring, the fruits of the later year/If I want what charms and delights, what satisfies and nourishes/If I want to wrap heaven and earth into a single name/I name you Shakuntala and that says it all.

who can make her that engrossed in her thoughts. Time passes and no one comes to take her to the palace. She is pregnant with Dushyanta's child, so her father sends her to the royal court for their reunion. She loses her signet ring on her way to the palace when she stops to worship Shiva at the Ganges, and, because of the curse and the circumstances in which she presents herself there – pregnant, with no royal ring, and cursed – Dushyanta fails to acknowledge her as his wife. Heart-broken, she pleads to the gods to take her away from the earth to the safe realm from which her mother came. Her wish is granted, but the curse is broken when a fisherman finds the ring in the entrails of a fish. The king suffers from feelings of guilt and injustice. Finally, Dushyanta is reunited with Shakuntala when the gods allow him to discover his now infant son, and Shakuntala forgives him. Their son is called "Bharata," or "All-Tamer," whose rule confers on India its official name as a modern nation in most Indian languages: *Bharat*.

Dorothy Matilda Figueira indicates the enduring and profound interest in the subject of Shakuntala by comparing the no fewer than forty-six translations of Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam published in Europe in the nineteenth century in twelve different languages. Jones's Shakuntala alone was reprinted five times in England between 1790 and 1807 and translated and published many times throughout the continent. The story of Shakuntala and Dushyanta was adapted for plays, operas, and ballets all over Europe. Herder's Zerstreute Blätter – in which he showed himself to be transformed by Sakontala, as well as by the Bhagavad-Gita and the Manu-Samhita

– was frequent reading for Novalis. Herder had already translated into verse the passage from Wilkins' Bhagvat-Geeta that contained Arjuna's pantheistic vision: "Ich bin der Schöpfung Geist, ihr Anfang, Mittel und Ende."[xxxiii] Herder's commentary on the passage linked the Hindu concept of the union of *atman* and *Brahman* with the union of the human and the divine. The translator concludes this dialogues on metempsychosis in the work with a "Hymn to the Night-Mother," which influenced Novalis directly. Majer had called Sanskrit poetry the "Morgentraüme unseres Geschlechtes," the "childhood dreams of our species," giving currency to the image of India as not only the birthplace of mankind, but its place of childhood, as well.[5] When Sakontala inspired Novalis himself, he linked the death of his fiancée, Sophie von Kühn, at age 15 to the idea of India as the prematurely vanished location of humanity's childhood. Novalis described his intensely personal experience at Sophie's graveside, during which he felt time and space were transcended, nullifying the power of death, as one of the most important of his life.

Herder's "Hymn to the Night-Mother," Forster's Sakontala, and the death of Sophie von Kühn lie behind the composition of Novalis' Hymnen an die Nacht. In the first four of these six hymns exists substantial evidence of the influence of the Shakuntala character, which is sometimes equated with Sophie. The empty world of Novalis' narrating voice, the "lordly stranger" who is "like a king," is the world of Light, which is juxtaposed with the holy, nocturnal world of his beloved. He says of

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[xxxiii] I am the Creation Spirit, its beginning, middle, and end.

her "Fernen der Erinnerung, Wünsche der Jugend, der Kindheit Träume, des ganzen langen Lebens kurze Freuden und vergebliche Hoffnungen kommen in grauen Kleidern, wie Abendnebel nach der Sonne Untergang" (Novalis 131).[xxxiv] Similarly, in Act I, "The Hunt," Dushyanta describes Shakuntala's beauty behind the simple clothes of the hermitage: "The moon in added splendor/Shines for its spot of dark;/Yet more the maiden slender/Charms in her dress of bark" (Ryder 9). Novalis' narrator goes on to state that "ein ernstes Antlitz seh ich froh erschrocken, das sanft und andachtsvoll sich zu mir neigt, und unter unendlich verschlungenen Locken der Mutter liebe Jugend zeigt. Wie arm und kindisch dünkt mir das Licht nun" (Novalis 133).[xxxv] This seems directly related to Dushyanta who, after witnessing Shakuntala's meditative devotion to a simple, natural life, finds empty his royal life of hunting, polygamy, and bureaucratic duties. In this first of the hymns, love is held up as the power that restores the unity of opposite sexes which enables the couple to regain their divinity, for in Hinduism virtually all divinities who are male have female counterparts.[6]

Novalis, then, in the second hymn, associates his Light-versus-Night schema with the short duration of a material life and the infinity of a release from embodiment, lamenting the small-mindedness that he sees around him:

[xxxiv] Distances of memory, wishes of youth, dreams of childhood, of one's whole long life's brief joys and vain hopes arrive in gray clothes, like evening mist after sunset.
[xxxv] A grave countenance I see, startled with gladness, which gently and reverently inclines toward me and amid infinitely tangled locks reveals the mother's lovely youth. How paltry and childish seems now the Light to me! (Passage 3-4).

> Zugemessen ward dem Lichte seine Zeit; aber zeitlos und raumlos ist der Nacht Herrschaft. - Ewig ist die Dauer des Schlafs. Heiliger Schlaf […] Nur die Thoren verkennen dich und wissen von keinem Schlafe, als den Schatten, den du in jener Dämmerung der wahrhaften Nacht mitleidig auf uns wirfst (ibid. 133).[xxxvi]

The following hymn finds the poet returning to the story of Dushyanta and Shakuntala. After Dushyanta rejects Shakuntala and realizes his mistake, he is grief-stricken until the gods show him the way to her. Novalis' hero was also "vorwärts nicht konnte und rückwärts nicht, und am fliehenden, verlöschten Leben mit unendlicher Sehnsucht hing: – da kam aus blauen Fernen – von den Höhen meiner alten Seligkeit ein Dämmerungsschauer" (ibid. 135).[xxxvii] This hymn provides the forum for Novalis' personal outpouring about his experience at Sophie's grave.

In the fourth hymn, Novalis iterates the malaise of his hero: wer oben stand auf dem Grenzgebürge der Welt, und hinübersah in das neue Land, in der Nacht Wohnsitz – warlich der kehrt nicht in das Treiben der Welt zurück, in das Land, wo das Licht in ewiger Unruh hauset (ibid. 137).[xxxviii] He puts his cursed knowledge of

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[xxxvi] Apportioned to the Light was its time, but timeless and spaceless is the Night's dominion. Eternal is the duration of sleep. Holy sleep! […] Only fools mistake thee and know of no sleep save that shadow which in that twilight of the true Night thou dost cast compassionately upon us (Passage 4).

[xxxvii] …incapable of moving forward nor yet backward either, and clung to fleeting extinquished life with infinite yearning – then, out of blue distances, from the pinnacles of my old blessedness, there came a twilight shutter (ibid. 5).

his materiality to work, however, as Dushyanta does in Act VI, "Separation from Shakuntala": "Still wakest thou, cheerful Light, that weary man to his labor […] Gladly will I stir busy hands, everywhere behold where thou hast need of me" (Ryder 61). The hymn's narrator again longs to be freed from embodiment: "Einst zweigt deine Uhr das Ende der Zeit, wenn du wirst wie unser einer, und voll Sehnsucht und Inbrunst auslöschest und stirbst. In mir fühl ich deiner Geschäftigkeit Ende – himmlische Freyheit, selige Rückkehr" (Novalis 139).[xxxix]

It is in hymn five that Novalis leaves the story of Shakuntala and packs in the rest of the collection's themes. Partaking of a long tradition, he invokes Dionysus as the symbol of a childhood since passed: "ein Gott in den Trauben" for whom

> der Liebe heilger Rausch ein süßer Dienst der schönsten Götterfrau – ein ewig buntes Fest der Himmelskinder und der Erdbewohner rauschte das Leben, wie ein Frühling, durch die Jahrhunderte hin – Alle Geschlechter verehrten kindlich die zarte, tausendfältige Flamme, als das hochste der Welt (ibid. 143).[xl]

[xxxviii] … whoever has stood up there on the watershed of the world and gazed across into the new land, into the dwelling place of the Night – truly, he does not return to the doings of the world, to the land where the Light dwells in everlasting unrest (ibid. 6)

[xxxix] Some day thy clock shall indicate the end of time, when thou wilt become like us, and, full of yearning and ardor, wilt be extinguished and die. I feel within me thy activity's end, heavenly freedom, blessed return (ibid. 7).

[xl] A god in the grape [for whom] love's consecrate intoxication a sweet service to the fairest of divine ladies. Life, an uneding many-colored festival of the cildren of heaven and of the dwellers of the earth, rushed like a springtome down through the

This was interrupted by the arrival of death, the knowledge of which is evoked in vaguely Platonic terms:

> Mit kühnem Geist und hoher Sinnenglut
>
> Verschönte sich der Mensch die grause Larve,
>
> Ein sanfter Jüngling löscht das Licht und ruht –
>
> Sanft wird das Ende, wie ein When der Harfe.
>
> Erinnerung schmilzt in kühler Schattenflut,
>
> So sang das Lied dem trauerigen Bedarfe.
>
> Das ernste Zeichen einer fernen Macht,
>
> Doch unenträthselt blieb die ewige Nacht (ibid.).[xli]

In explaining the events that follow the arrival of death and human beings' knowledge of it, Novalis indirectly invokes the Himalayan anthropodicy and directly criticizes the rationalism of his own age:

> Zu Ende neigte die alte Welt sich. Des jungen Geschlechts Lustgarte verwelkte – hinauf in den freyern, wüsten Raum strebten die unkindlichen, wachsenden Menschen. […] Mit eiserner Kette band sie die dürre Zahl und das strenge Maaß. Wie in Staub und Lüfte zerfiel in dunkle Worte die

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centuries. All races adored the tender thousand-fold flame as the highest thing in the world (ibid. 8)

[xli] Bold and with sensuous ardor man invested/The grisly specter with a beauteous guise:/A mild youth quenched the light, they said, and rested;/Mild was the closing, like a harp that sighs,/And memory, in a shadowed stream arrested,/Dissolved. Need forced their song to such a wise./Unriddled still remained eternal Night,/The solemn sign of a far-distant might (ibid. 9).

> unermeßliche Blüthe des Lebens. Entflohn war der beschwörende Glauben, und die allverwandelnde, allverschwisternde Himmelsgenossin, die Fantasie (ibid. 145).[xlii]

Thus,

> Nicht mehr war das Licht der Götter Aufenthalt und himmlisches Zeichen – den Schleyer der Nacht warfen sie über sich. Die Nacht ward der Offenbarungen mächtiger Schoos – in ihn kehrten die Götter zurück – schlummerten ein, um in neuen herrlichen Gestalten auszugehn über die veränderte Welt (ibid.).[xliii]

This sad state of affairs is finally corrected with the arrival of Christ, when "das Morgenlands ahndende, blüthenreiche Weisheit erkannte zuerst der neuen Zeit Beginn […] in der weiten Zukunft Namen" (ibid.).[xliv] He even argues – as Philostratus had of Plato, Pythagoras, and Dionysus – that the "singer" Jesus journeyed to Hindustan, a theory that persists even now.[7]

[xlii] Toward its close the old world waned. The pleasure garden of the youthful race withered; up into waste and freer space strove the unchildlike, maturing men. The gods, together with their retinues, vanished. Alone and lifeless Nature stood. Sure number and strict measure held it in clamp of iron chains. As into dust and air, the boundlessly blossoming life disintegrated into dark words. Fled was incantatory faith, fled the all-transforming, all consanguinating heaven-dweller, Fantasy (ibid.).

[xliii] No longer was the Light the dwelling place of the gods and a heavenly sign: they cast upon themselves the veil of Night. The Night became the mighty womb of revelations; thereunto the gods returned, and fell into slumber, in order to emerge in new and more splendid forms across the changed world (ibid. 9-10).

[xliv] The East's foresensing, rich-blossoming wisdom first perceived the new era's beginning […]. In the name of the far future… (ibid. 10).

In the sixth hymn, Novalis launches one final call for a return to the past:

Die Vorzeit wo die Sinne licht

In hohen Flammen brannten

Des Vaters Hand und Angesicht

Die Menschen noch erkannten.

Und hohen Sinns, einfältiglich

Noch mancher seinem Urbild glich (ibid. 155).[xlv]

He adds

Die Lieben sehnen sich wohl auch

Und sandten uns der Sehnsucht Hauch.

Hinunter zu der süßen Braut,

Zu Jesus, dem Geliebten (ibid. 157).[xlvi]

As has been noted by Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Novalis' Christianity has nothing to do with sin and its consequences; nor does his utopia have much in common with the Christian heaven.[8] Also his Christ is a transfiguration, a rebirth of old gods. Novalis felt that Christianity could be restored to this ancient splendor and reconcile all the nations of the world. In Europa oder Christentum [Europe or Christianity]

[xlv] The times foregone, when in bright dance/High spirits flamed, and when/The Father's hand and countenance/Were still in mankind's ken,/And nobly, simply, many bore/The lofty image that he bore (Passage 14).

[xlvi] Perhaps our loved ones likewise longing/have wafted us this sigh of longing./Down to the sweet bride [Shakuntala] come away,/To Jesus whom we love! (ibid. 15).

(1799), he argues that it is the mission of Germany, the "kernel of mankind," to bring about this reconciliation. The hymns are testimony to Novalis' strong intuition of a divine world beyond the senses and to his certainty that humanity, when restored to its original perfection, could exist in that resplendent world. Friedrichsmeyer also emphasizes androgyny in Novalis' work in its contemporary meaning as asexual. This is in fact the opposite of the gender construction inherent in Hindu conceptions of divinity, which are literally androgynous, that is, a union of both sexes, or hermaphroditic. She, however, sees Novalis' hymns only in Christian terms, ignoring his Shakuntala fascination.

Novalis' poetic language, which gives us glimpses into both sexes, is fragmentary and aphoristic, qualities he favored in his other writings – as did some fellow early German Romantics, such as the Schlegel brothers – over the more rationalist forms employed by Fichte and Schelling. This preference is indicative of his sense of each human life as but an incomplete portion of a larger existence that it can never comprehend, despite his poetic declarations. Novalis' works suggest that we poor humans strive to pin down our existence, to found a philosophical system rooted in spatio-temporal human freedom, while at the same time attempting to transcend our materiality; therefore, we are never satisfied. For Novalis an issue that arises out of this dilemma is that of authenticity, of being true to our embodiment and our spirituality. Novalis was concerned with "how to be true to the fact that the choices we make about who we are to be are themselves choices based on fully

contingent matters, that are not only themselves not objects of choice but whose very nature is necessarily obscured from our view" (cited in Pinkard 146). This desire for "system" in philosophy is thus itself a form of pathology, a "logical illness" as Novalis calls it: "Philosophy is actually homesickness – the urge to be everywhere at home" (ibid. 147).

Novalis seems to have believed that there were only two artistic cures for this "illness": poetry, and the unsystematic use of aphorism, epigram, and fragment. He seems distinctly Romantic in his attempt to respond to the tensions of material existence by creating works of art. The Sanskrit texts which most appealed to him, however, were those in which the primary deity to be worshipped is Shiva, the destroyer, as in Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam. As mentioned earlier, in the past several centuries the place of Brahma, the creator, has diminished (replaced to some extent by devotion to Ganesha, the god of prosperity), and Shiva and Vishnu have largely squeezed Brahma out of the Hindu trinity. Shiva for Novalis is to be properly seen, though, as the sublime destoyer, the destroyer of the negative "Light" which plagues the poet's narrator, readying the world for the arrival of Christ. But while Novalis was profoundly influenced by Herder's and Majer's commentary on Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam, he was also influenced by the strong personality of his friend Schelling, for whom the most important god in the Hindu trinity is Vishnu, particularly in his incarnation as Krishna, or, more accurately, as Govinda, the name given to Krishna as a young shepherd boy.

II

Schelling's Point of Indifference

As is argued by Taylor and Pinkard, Schelling was Fichte's successor and something of a boy wonder.[9] Although five years younger than Hegel, Schelling arranged to have Hegel invited to teach at the University at Jena in 1800, and was the leader in their collaborations. Schelling began as a follower of Fichte, but went on to incorporate Spinoza and ideas gleaned from texts such as the medieval Gitagovinda, which itself draws on the ancient Bhagavad-Gita, into his philosophy. He applied the Fichtean thesis that subjectivity posits the world to an ideal of nature, arguing that subjectivity is nature's unifying principle, and thus developed a poetic vision of a cosmic spiritual principle into a philosophy of nature.

Schelling was ambitious and experimental by temperament, open to testing and refining his ideas. In the spirit of the oscillation between the Vaishnavic and the Shaivic, Schelling kept revising what is ultimately a philosophy of becoming in an attempt to adapt Kant's conclusions and resolve the paradoxes that led to them. "Aenesidemus" had opened up arguments about Kant's alleged refutation of skepticism, as well as throwing into question the issue of things-in-themselves, but Fichte had not really resolved the issue, either. This meant that there were still no viable responses to questions about the status of freedom in the natural world. For Schelling, Hinduism would indicate that one key to understanding such questions was

precisely the issue of things-in-themselves. Since Fichtean idealism viewed everything as posited by the subject, it had difficulty making sense of the relation between experience as the grounds of belief and experience as emerging from the world. Schelling thought that even if it were true that things-in-themselves caused our sensations, those causes could never offer us reasons for faith in the noumena behind such things-in-themselves. Causality involved supposed facts, our judgments purported norms, but belief was conditional on something else.

Majer's translation of the Gitagovinda marked a turning point in Schelling's thinking.[10] Schelling interpreted the medieval play as laying open the mystery of the reconcilation of the individual human spirit with the larger Absolute, which he thought passed from India to Egypt, to Greek Eleusis, and eventually into the esoteric gospels of the Christian saints John and Paul.[11] Schelling was also familiar with Jones's Asiatick Researches, and in fact wrote, in 1805, "What is Europe really but a sterile trunk which owes everything to oriental grafts?"[12] The system that he developed in the few years after Hymnen an die Nacht iterated Novalis' theme of a new universal religion destined to restore the knowledge of forgotten mysteries and the message of mystical Christianity. It would prove to be a point of departure for many of the esoteric religious movements of the nineteenth century, from the Saint-Simonians to the Transcendentalists.

The first English translation of the Gitagovinda by William Jones was published in Calcutta in the Transactions of the Asiatic Society (1792) and again in

London in Asiatick Researches 3 (1799). The first German translation by F. H. van Dalberg was based on Jones's and appeared in 1802. Barbara Stoler Miller, translator of the now standard English edition of the Gitagovinda, quotes a letter from Goethe to Schiller in which Goethe states that what was so remarkable in the text was the "extremely varied motives by which an extremely simple subject is made endless" (Jayadeva x). Schelling read the Dalberg translation and his letters, notably those to A. W. Schlegel demonstrate the link that for him ties these ideas to the Gitagovinda.[13]

For Schelling, as for Friedrich Schlegel, an initial enthusiasm for Hindu religious texts and the apparent answers that they provide will eventually give way, in his older years, to disillusionment and a rejection of the German fascination with India, combined with an embracing of Christianity. Figueira presents this schema, which she locates originally in Said, in relation to Schlegel. She emphasizes that Schlegel escapes his personal aesthetic and religious crises by constructing an Orientalist past. While this is to a large extent true, it better needs to be taken up in relation to Schlegel, in the final section of this chapter; yet, here the same dynamic of enthusiasm and rejection also plays out, however, in perhaps a less dramatic fashion, in the work of Schelling.

As noted earlier, the Gitagovinda is a lyrical poem in twelve cantos composed in the early twelfth century by Jayadeva, the court poet of the Bengali king Lakshmanasena. The Gitagovinda is one of the last great devotional, or *bhakti*, texts composed in Sanskrit, written in an era when vernacular languages were becoming

the predominant way of demonstrating religious devotion in India. The text is meant to be sung for its cantos are set in various differing musical modes, or *ragas*, each of which is meant to convey a different emotion to the listener. The work celebrates Krishna's youth as Govinda, the shepherd boy in the forest of Vrindavan, and the love between him and his human consort Radha.[14] Krishna and Radha's relationship begins with an initial rush of passion, shifts into jealousy and separation, and finally reconciliation and reunion. The Gitagovinda is thus an allegory of the eventual union of the human soul with the Absolute, using a romance to recast many of the Bhagavad-Gita's teachings about the reconcilation of *atman* and *Brahman*. The Gitagovinda begins with Krishna and Radha's union and ends with their reunion and between there is separation, filled with remembrance and anticipation.

> This pattern, union-separation-reunion, is the conventional pattern in Indian erotic literature. But it is also the archetypal structure in Indian ontology: in the beginning was the All, the One, *Brahman*, *Atman*, *Purusa*, the sacred power; creation meant separation, duality, multiplicity; and then at the end of each cosmic era, there is reunion, reabsorption into the One; and then it starts again and again and again… (Siegel 159-60).[15]

The Bhagavad-Gita's emphasis on a personal god is already apparent in the name taken by the poet to whom the Gitagovinda is attributed: "Jayadeva," which means "triumph (*jaya*) of God (*deva*)" in Sanskrit. The play's brief introduction alludes to the Romantic couple's passion, but the succeeding cantos show that

Jayadeva considers Krishna neither a mere mortal nor an avatar of the god Vishnu as in many other parts of the Hindu tradition, but as the supreme deity. Krishna's brother Balarama takes the position usually occupied by Krishna in the enumeration of the avatars of Vishnu. The first song of the play begins by emphasizing the power and importance of Krishna:

> *pralaya-payodhi-jale dhrtavan asi vedam*
>
> *vihita-vahitra-caritram akhedam /*
>
> *kesava dhrt-mina-sarira*
>
> *jaya jagad-isa hare // dhrwa-padam //* (ibid. 287).[xlvii]

The song goes on to establish the play's Vaishnavic stance in relation to the Vedas:

> *nindasi yajña-vidher ahaha sruti-jatam*
>
> *sadaya-hrdaya darsita-pasu-ghatam /*
>
> *kesava dhrta-buddha-sarira*
>
> *jaya jagad-isa hare* // (ibid. 288).[xlviii]

The song that follows continues these themes, giving the divine attributes of Krishna as Vishnu, and further emphasizing that the entire Gitagovinda describes the deity's divinity. Vishnu is thus not only assigned the attributes of Krishna – of maintainer, restorer – but is also shown to have a more destructive, Shaivic side, depicted in the

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[xlvii] In seas that rage as the aeon of chaos collapses/You keep the holy Veda like a ship straight on course/You take form as the Fish, Krishna/Triumph, Hari, Lord of the World! (Miller 70).

[xlviii] Moved by deep compassion, you condemn the Vedic way/That ordains animal slaughter in rites of sacrifice./You take form as the enlightened Buddha, Krishna. Triumph, Hari Lord of the World! (ibid. 71).

angry jealousy of his female consort. Jayadeva saw Vishnu holistically, involving both the degenerative and regenerative cycles of Nature, and this appealed to Schelling who envisioned a dualistic process of human action that would eventually create community.

Having set the philosophical framework in the opening songs, Jayadeva's text returns to a more conventional tale of Romantic love. The next act describes the symbols of spring, which are intended to evoke a mood of love in the listeners, and to present themes of restoration. This mood is marred by Radha's jealousy, however, as Krishna flirts with a group of cowherd girls. Radha now withdraws and sits apart, sulking and despondent, only to burst into rage when Krishna comes to meet her. Her anger and dismissal make Krishna realize what he has done. He eventually succeeds in assuaging her anger and convinces Radha of his love. They are reconciled and the text ends by describing their erotic and spiritual love. The Gitagovinda was intended be read on many different levels simultaneously. The idiom of love, betrayal, and reconciliation speaks easily to quotidian human experience, but the theological and mystical levels are always present. In the end, deity and devotee are described as needing and loving one another, as neither is complete without the other. Radha's demand for exclusive love is at first denied, but in the end her persistence and conviction bring their reward.

For Schelling, the Gitagovinda suggested that a unity of subject and object was possible. Schelling explained in a letter he wrote to Hegel in February 1795 that

the only real difference between skeptical systems and idealist systems had to do with their respective starting points: the former takes as its starting-point the absolute object, the latter the absolute subject (not yet conditioned by any object).[16] He felt that the truth of the matter lay in some way of reconciling those two starting-points with each other in a way that is nonetheless consistent with the human spontaneity and autonomy championed by Kant. Both needed to be understood as different manifestations of some one underlying "absolute" reality, as Spinoza had postulated. While the Spinozistic viewpoint takes human beings as part of nature and the Fichtean regards them as self-determining beings, both are to be seen as merely manifestations of a single underlying reality, the "absolute," in which Krishna and Radha are symoblically united and re-united. In most of his early writings, Schelling appealed to Leibniz's notion of a pre-established harmony between mind and nature to make his point. He emphasized, however, that this harmony could not be the result of external ordering, but had to be the result of deeper unity, as Spinoza had thought.

Rather than finding, as had Fichte, that the distinction between subject and object was subjectively established, Schelling argues that we must intuit that in finding a boundary between subjective and objective, we have not only drawn the boundary ourselves, but are already on both sides of its dividing line, are both subjective agents and natural objects. Since this original unity is pre-reflective, it can only be apprehended by a type of intellectual intuition, seeing that subjectivity and objectivity are points of view stemming from something deeper than themselves.

Schelling thus interpreted the absolute in Spinozean, non-Fichtean terms as the expression of some underlying universal reality common to both the subjective "empirical" "I" and the objective "Not-I" of the natural world that the subject strives to know and transform. He concluded early in his career that his philosophy was not a matter of what arguments are put forth, so much as how one views the subject-object problem in the first place. In a sense, however, Schelling's view ultimately makes the question of dualism moot, just as the Bhagavad-Gita did many of the Vedic debates over dualism.

Schelling constructed a systematic *Naturphilsophie* within the context of which he would attempt to treat nature more holistically than by either empirical science or transcendental idealism. This would first be outlined in his Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur [Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature] (1797), which tries to provide an account of the objective, natural side of how we understand human self-consciousness, by deriving consciousness from objects. *Naturphilosophie* was not a "doctrine of science" as Fichte tried to establish, nor was it exactly a "philosophy of nature." In its first conception, Schelling's *Naturphilosophie* was to construct the view of nature that empirical investigations were presupposed to in their experimental procedures. Schelling felt that Kant and Fichte had laid the groundwork for him now to show that the dueling camps of modern philosophy – realism and idealism – were themselves only manifestations of the absolute, which was the unity of the two.

Thus, through “intellectual intuition” of the absolute, the dual developments of *Naturphilosophie* and transcendental idealism would be united.

Pinkard sums up Schelling’s dilemma:

> For Schelling, if nature is purely a mechanical system (as Kant argued in The Critique of Pure Reason), if one eschews appeal to things-in-themselves (and therefore eschews any notion of transcendental causality), and if we are necessarily to construe ourselves as free, natural beings, then we are left with an insoluble contradiction, unless we hold that nature, regarded as a whole, as “Idea,” is not a mechanical system but a series of basic “forces” or “impulses” that mirror at the basic level the same kind of determinations that are operative in us at the level of self-conscious freedom (Pinkard 180-181).

Schelling felt that by studying the basic forces of nature he would be able to construct an account of human freedom, for that indeed must be inherent in nature. He thought that nature exhibits Kant’s sense of “purposiveness without purpose,” except that its fundamental tendencies toward fluctuation moved toward a growing kind of unity that culminates in human communities. This difference between Kant and Schelling in terms of whether it is nature or human beings themselves that create community is not dissimilar to the distinction made earlier between Rousseau and Herder on the same issue. If there is a kind of human *Geist*, it is communal, and arrives eventally at consciousness of itself as a larger unit.

In Schelling's *Naturphilosophie*, nature was a continual process of organization, of becoming intelligible, not of degeneration and regeneration. He does, however, divide nature into "higher" and "lower" powers of freedom. At the lower level, nature constrains our rational understanding of it; at the higher, human beings engage their will autonomously. While nature is not seen as degenerative and creative, each power of organization is the result of the two countervailing tendencies that balance each other when they reach an "indifference point." The new form of organization, however, exhibits the same basic oppositional traits, and it in turn leads to a new indifference point that is itself a new and higher form of organization. This process continues until an absolute indifference point is found and nature culminates in divinity, transcending the material. For Schelling, this is not a uni-directional process toward entropy but an oscillating process of organization that eventually reaches a level at which the oppositional points vanish.

In the Bhagavad-Gita such an "indifference point" is explained in terms of actions that the individual must take and it thus surfaces in many of the passages on *yoga*. Though it is used in a vast number of meanings in the text, the term *yoga* (and its variants: *yukta*, *yogin*, *yuj-*) is used primarily to mean the union of *atman* and *Brahman*, the means for attaining such union, and the attributes of the individual who approaches it: yoga-sthah kuru karmani sangam tyaktva, dhanamjaya/ siddhy-asiddhyoh samo bhutva. Samatvam yoga ucyate" [2, 48] (Zaehner 145).[xlix] This

"sameness-and-indifference" is found in the individual "devoid of all dualities": "jñeyah sa nitya-samnyasi yo na dvesti na kanksati:/ nirdvandvo hi, maha-bho, sukham bandhat pramucyate" [5, 3] (ibid. 202).[l] Later in the text, however, Krishna reveals to Arjuna that such reverence for non-duality can be reached by devotion to the one god, in this case, Vishnu in the form of Krishna: "ye tv aksaram anirdesyam avyaktam paryupasate/ sarvatra-gam acintyam ca kuta-stham acalam dhruvam,/ samniyamy' endriya-gramam sarvatra sama-buddhayah,/ te prapnuvanti mam eva sarva-bhuta-hite ratah"[12, 3-4] (ibid. 322-24).[li] In the Gitagovinda the same ideal of sameness-and-indifference is expressed poetically: "radha-vadana-vilokana-vikasita vividha-vikara-vibhangam/ jala-nidhim iva vidhu-mandala-darsana-taralita-tunga-tarangam/ harim eka-rasam ciram abhilasita-vilasam/ sa dadarsa guru-harso-vasam-vada-vadanam anaga-nivasam (Siegel 308).[lii] Krishna, though God here, suffers and strives in very human ways. Radha releases him from the bonds of emotion and,

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[xlix] Stand fast in Yoga, surrendering attachment; in success and failure be the same and then get busy with your works. Yoga means 'sameness-and-indifference' (Zaehner 51).

[l] This is the mark of the man whose renunciation is abiding: he hates not nor desires, for, devoid of all dualities, how easily is he released from bondage (ibid. 62).

[li] But those who revere the indeterminate Imperishable Unmanifest, unthinkable though coursing everywhere, sublime, aloof (*kutastha*), unmoving, firm, who hold in check the complex of the senses, in all things equal-minded, taking pleasure in the weal of all contingent beings, these too attain to Me (ibid. 88).

[lii] All his deep-locked emotions broke when he saw Radha's face, /Like sea waves cresting when the full moon appears. /She saw her passion reach the soul of Hari's mood – /The weight of joy strained his face; Love's ghost haunted him (Miller 120).

together, they reach the sameness-and-indifference found in Arjuna's devotion to Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita (although Krishna and Arjuna's is not a romantic liaison).

Just as "samenessa nd-indifference" is a state to be achieved through one's own effort, Schelling transforms Kant and Fichte's ideas of freedom into a process of becoming autonomous. Human beings attain more and more freedom by climbing their way out of the realm of the material into a position at which they become unconstrained by nature. The higher power of autonomous willing only seems to be a problem, Schelling claims, if one operates with an individualist view of the relation of agent and world; the problem itself dissipates if one adopts a more interpersonal view of freedom.[17] He argues in Philosophische Briefe über Dogmatismus und Kriticismus [Philosophical Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism] (1795) that we must be what we wish to call ourselves theoretically.

> Daß wir es aber seien, davon kann uns nichts, als unser *Streben*, es zu werden, überzeugen. Dieses Streben realisirt unser Wissen vor uns selbst: und *dieses* wird eben dadurch reines Product unsrer Freiheit. Wir müssen uns selbst da hinauf gearbeitet haben, von wo wir ausgehen wollen; »*hinaufvernünfteln*« kann sich der Mensch nicht, noch durch Andre dahin vernünfteln lassen (Werke III, 75-76).[liii]

[liii] And nothing can convince us of being that, except our very striving to be just that. This striving realizes our knowledge of ourselves, and thus this knowledge becomes the pure product of our freedom. We ourselves must have worked our way up to the

He argues that one must establish firm ground oneself in order to construct a spontaneity that is divorced from the natural world.

Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature therefore presents what Schelling hopes will eventually be the "objective" aspect of his total system. The other "subjective" side of Schelling's philosophy appeared in his System des transcendentalen Idealismus [System of Transcendental Idealism] (1800). Having described nature and the fact that human beings must strive to be both in and above nature, Schelling now attempts to describe human consciousness itself, as had Kant before him, showing how we reconcile our autonomy with the acknowledgment of that which limits our knowledge. In this work, Schelling puts forward the view that nature is the product of a subjectivity that is both conscious and unconscious. Unconscious subjectivity strives to establish full subjectivity, while conscious subjectivity tries to unite itself to the objectivity that is the absolute indifference point inspired by Vaishnavic thought. For these two things to happen, a higher unity, in which conscious subjectivity and nature are one, must be attained. For Schelling the path to attaining this unity leads through art.

The System of Transcendental Idealism describes the path from pure subjectivity or self-consciousness, through art, to objectivity. The most innovative and influential portion of this treatise is its conclusion, which was influenced by Tieck, Novalis, and the Schlegel brothers (and which would later influence

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point from which we want to start. People cannot get there by arguing themselves up to that point, nor can they be argued into that point by others (cited in Pinkard 176).

Schopenhauer), presenting art as the concrete accomplishment of the philosophical task.[18] Schelling's philosophy of art is presented in an epilogue to his system of transcendental idealism: "Deduktion eines allgemeinen Organs der Philosophie, oder Hauptsäße der Philosophie der Kunst nach Grundsäßen des transscendentalen Idealismus" [Deduction of a Universal Organ of Philosophy, or: Essentials of the Philosophy of Art according to the Principles of Transcendental Idealism], and is the first announcement of Schelling's own system of absolute philosophy: the "System of Identity." One might argue, however, that this is not so much a system of "identity" as of "identification."

The epilogue begins with the "Deduktion des Kunstprodukts überhaupt" [Deduction of the Art-Product as such], in which Schelling postulates that his intuition is to bring together the identification of the conscious and unconscious self, as well as consciousness of this identification. The product of this intuition unites itself with characteristics of nature and freedom. Schelling argues that nature begins as unconsciousness and ends as consciousness; he states, however, that the process of production is not purposive, in contrast to that of the product. Here the self must begin subjectively, with consciousness, and end objectively, without consciousness; the self is conscious with respect to the process of production, unconscious in regard to the product. This same identification of the necessity to reconcile *atman* and *Brahman*, so clearly spelled out in the Bhagavad-Gita as a process that begins with overcoming consciousness and mere spatio-temporal experience, is the moving force

of the Gitagovinda. Conscious and unconscious activities are to be one in the product otherwise there is no identity for the self. Intelligence will therefore end with recognition of the identity expressed in the product as an identity whose principle lies in intelligence itself; it will end, that is, in a complete intuiting of itself.

Schelling then goes on to characterize the art-product. The basic character of the work of art is that of an unconscious infinity, a synthesis of nature and freedom:

> Die ganze Philosophie geht aus, und muß augehen von einem Princip, das als das absolut Identische schlechthin nichtobjektiv ist. […] Diese allgemein anerkannte und auf keine Weise hinwegzuleugnende Objektivität der intellektuellen Anschauung ist die Kunst selbst. Denn die ästhetische Anschauung eben ist die objektiv gewordene intellectuelle. Das Kunstwerk nur reflektirt mir, was sonst durch nichts reflektirt wird, jenes absolut Identische, was selbst im Ich schon sich getrennt hat (Ausgewählte Werke VII, 614).[liv]

Nature, to the artist, is nothing more than it is to the philosopher, being simply the ideal world appearing under permanent restrictions, or merely the imperfect reflection of a world existing, not outside him, but within. Schelling ends his epilogue with

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[liv] The whole of philosophy starts, and must start, from a principle which, *qua* absolutely identical, is utterly nonobjective. […] This universally acknowledged and altogether incontestable objectivity of intellectual intuition is art itself. For the aesthetic intuition simply is intellectual intuition become objective. The work of art merely reflects to me what is otherwise not reflected by anything, namely that absolutely identical which has already divided itself even in the self (Heath 229-30).

"Allgemeine Anmerkung zu dem ganzen System" [General Observation on the Whole System], in which he observes that

> Was die intellektuelle Anschauung für den Philosophen ist, das ist die ästhetiche für sein Objekt. […] Das eine, welchem die absolute Objektivität gegeben ist, ist die Kunst. Nehmt, kann man sagen, der Kunst die Objektivität, so hört sie auf zu sein, was sie ist, und wird Philosophie (ibid. 630)[lv]

For Schelling, the self as an intelligence is thus completed in four stages: (1) the act of self-consciousness in which that absolute identical first divides itself, (2) the self intuits that determinacy posited in the objective of its activity, (3) the self becomes an object to itself as sensing, and (4) the self intuits itself as productive. Schelling's conception of art advances the idea of a continuous progression from lower to higher orders, reaching toward perfection. Schelling thus imbues Schiller's notion of the aesthetic as the locus of recovered unity between freedom and necessity an ontological foundation.[19] In fact, Schelling insisted that the necessary intuition of this "absolute identity" cannot be intellectual but must be aesthetic, for art could show what philosophy could not. Later in life, however, Schelling would draw closer to Lutheran orthodoxy, and become almost an adversary of German Indian studies. The seeds of this shift are already perceptible in Philosophische Untersuchungen über das

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[lv] What intellectual intuition is for the philosopher, aesthetic intuition is for his object. […] The one field to which absolute objectivity is granted, is art. Take away objectivity from art, one might say, and it ceases to be what it is, and becomes philosophy (ibid. 233).

Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit [Philosophical Investigations on the Essence of Human Freedom] (1809), which, uses similar language and seems to prefigure both Schopenhauer's Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung [Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung] (1818, 1844) and Nietzsche's Die Geburt der Tragödie oder Griechentum und Pessimismus [The Birth of Tragedy or Ancient Greek Culture and Pessimism] (1872), although there is no clearly traceable influence of Schelling's short treatise on those other two works.[20]

III

Schlegel's Indictment of Indian Philosophy

The same oscillation between annhilation and restoration embodied in one philosophy occurs in the work of Friedrich Schlegel, and is best exemplified by his doctrine of irony. Novalis and the Schlegel brothers were immensely excited by Fichte's work and lectures, and Friedrich Schlegel's notion of Romantic irony draws from Fichte the idea of a creative subjectivity so sublimely free as to be disengaged even from its own aesthetic works. The detachment implicit in Friedrich Schlegel's irony, however, is not the same as the detachment from materiality emphasized in so many Hindu and Buddhist texts. In fact, irony is ultimately in opposition to true spiritual investment, for although it appears to embrace the paradoxes of existence, irony of the Romantic type seems to belie a personal unwillingness to invest in the sort of self-examination that would cause one to change one's mind in any

fundamental way (presuming that were possible). Although difficult to prove, this may be true of Schlegel, and may account to some degree for his retreat from challenging Hindu ideas to take refuge in the consolations of Christianity.

Most of the theoretical foundation for Schlegel's doctrine of irony is to be found in his definition of Romantic literature in his 116th *Athenaeums-fragment* on "progressive Universalpoesie," which states that Romantic poetry "als ihr erstes Gesetz anerkent, daß die Willkür des Dichters kein Gesetz über sich leide" (Kritische Schriften 39).[lvi] He claims that such poetry can

> sie am meisten zwischen dem Dargestellten und dem Dastellenden, frei von allem realen und idealen Interesse, auf den Flügeln der poetischen Reflexion in der Mitte schweben, diese Reflexion immer wieder potenzieren und wie in einer endlosen Reihe von Spiegeln vervielfachen" (ibid.).[lvii]

It seems to be precisely this endless reflecting that hinders irony in its pursuit of a "higher power," for in sheltering the poet from the truly difficult and necessary "*yoga*," or "spiritual exercise" as Zaehner sometimes translates it, an interest in the poet's material self is preserved. It may thus be no wonder that the word *Ironie* itself derives from the Greek *eironeia* meaning "dissimulation." Since irony consists of

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[lvi] Recognizes as its first commandment that the will of the poet can tolerate no law above itself (Firchow 175).

[lvii] Hover at the midpoint between the portrayed and the portrayer, free of all real and ideal self-interest, on the wings of poetic reflection, and can raise that reflection again and again to a higher power, can multiply it in an endless succession of mirrors (ibid.).

purporting a meaning that is different, often opposite, to a literal one, the poet is under no obligation to commit himself.[21] Schlegel's spiritual difficulty lay, however, not in an inability to commit himself to religious principles; it lay in an untenably enthusiastic initial investment in Hindu ideas that caused him then to retreat from such zealous positions. The attitude of irony – which was for Schlegel not just a literary technique but a philosophy of living – runs further risks, since the practice of Romantic irony may lead to irresponsible human actions. Although not ironic in intention, Tieck's protagonist William Lovell, who rapes his twin sister who then commits suicide, may be considered as a nihilist extention of the ironic tendency found in Schlegel.[22] Schlegel takes Romantic irony (as distinguished from Juvenal's or Swift's) as far as Tieck, but in the opposite direction – in search of religious salvation, conceived as a process of becoming. This sense of becoming would, for Schlegel as for others, derive to a large extent from his paradoxical encounter with Indian Studies.

As the French Revolution was unfolding its mass changes in 1789, Friedrich and August Wilhelm Schlegel experienced their own upheaval when their brother, Karl August, died in Madras at age 38. The youngest of the three brothers, he had entered the service of the British East India Company as an army officer, but his plans to write studies of Indian systems of government and of Hindu philosophy went unrealized. Both surviving brothers expressed their grief over his death in their work: August Wilhelm in his poetry of the 1790s, and Friedrich in the dedication of <u>Über</u>

die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier [On theLanguage and Wisdom of the Indians] (1808), almost twenty years later. The work contains the most elaborate expression of Friedrich Schlegel's thoughts about India and Indian religion, in which he gives an anthropological twist to Jones's theory by deducing from the relationship of language a relationship of race.

Inspired by Winckelmann's emphasis on the superiority and harmony of ancient Greek civilization, Friedrich Schlegel had begun his intellectual career as a classicist reading Sophocles and Plato; he shared with Herder and Lessing, however, an outspoken disdain for the classical Greek imitations of French Neo-classicism. Indeed, Schlegel described the Latin languages as "partly dead" and therefore deficient in creative elements.[23] Although the breadth and profundity of his mind impressed professors at Göttigen and Leipzig, his restlessness and introspection drove him in search of an understanding of that which lies beyond the human intellect. By 1795, his ideas about poetry were split between his denigration of modern poetry when juxtaposed to the ancient Greek, as is made clear in his essay "Über das Studium der griechischen Poesie" [On the Study of Greek Poetry], on the one hand, and on the other, his anticipation of the vindication of Romantic poetry.

Schlegel read Forster's Sakontala in 1797. Although he had been critical of Herder's interpretation of Indian sources prior to this, Herder's commentary on the play and the general enthusiasm for it stimulated Schlegel's interest in Indian literature. Schlegel's meeting with Majer in Jena in 1800 would be even more

formative, inspiring him to pursue the study of Sanskrit itself. He announced the great discovery of Shakuntala to his brother. August Wilhelm, who would become the true Sanskritist in the family, blamed Napoleon for delaying the arrival of Sanskrit in Europe. Nevertheless, Friedrich Schlegel was indebted to the Napoleonic Wars for the presence in Paris of his Sanskrit teacher, the British scholar Alexander Hamilton (1762-1824).[24] If the influence of Herder and Majer was seminal in inspiring Schlegel's Indian researches, it was his meeting with Hamilton in Paris early in 1803 that was formative for German Indian studies. By 1803, the rudiments of Sanskrit had reached Paris, instruction in the language had begun, and in a short time, the focal point of Sanskrit studies had shifted there from London (where it had arrived from Calcutta) making Paris the capital of nascent Indian studies.[25] Schlegel had first moved to Paris with Dorothea Veit, the daughter of the literary critic Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786), to study Persian with the orientalist Antoine-Léonard de Chézy (1773-1832). Hamilton, a former officer in the army of the East India Company and a member of the Asiatick Society had married a Bengali woman and, following the Peace of Amiens (1802), was busy cataloguing the Indian manuscripts that had worked their way into the Bibliothèque Nationale over the preceding decades.

Both brothers wrote articles for their quarterly *Athenäum* that reflected their championing of Sanskrit language and literature. Friedrich, in "Gespräch über die Poesie" [Discussions of Poetry], argues that the treasures of Oriental literature should

be as accessible as those of Greek and Roman antiquity, viewing India as the source of "*Universalpoesie*." In an essay entitled "Die Sprachen" [Languages], August Wilhelm describes the grammatical perfection of Sanskrit as the language of heaven, its characters having been designed by God himself, which, as mentioned earlier, the name of the script – *Devanagari* – intimates. It should be noted that their collaborator Schleiermacher referred to the Vedas as "the Bible of the Aryans."[26] Friedrich's fascination with Sanskrit literature is indicative of his longing to find in India a unifying spiritual revolution that might synthesize religion, philosophy, and art. He emphasized the similarities between Vedantic philosophy and German idealism, which, as mentioned above, center on questions of dualism. But Schlegel's longing mirrored his own religious crisis. Ironically, his growing competence in Sanskrit coincided with his new conviction of the centrality of Christianity, and the same week in March of 1808 that saw the publication of On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians saw his baptism as a Catholic at the church in Köln. Novalis saw Hinduism as paving the way for Christianity, but Schlegel, like Schelling, would eventually grow adversarial toward Hinduism (perhaps Novalis died too young to change his mind). This is already foreshadowed in On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians in his treatment of the Manu-Samhita, the Ramayana, the Upanishads, the Puranas, the Bhagavad-Gita, and Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam.

Antoine Berman's extensive study of translation among the Romantics and their sympathizers explores in great detail the translation of Shakespeare, Spanish

poetry, and Greco-Roman texts by Novalis, the Schlegels, Schleiermacher, and Hölderlin, among others, emphasizing their searches for German national identity and auto-affirmation. Berman virtually ignores, however, the fact that anyone in Germany was interested in orientalist scholarship, mentioning the existence of Schlegel's <u>On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians</u> only in a brief footnote about Schlegel's lack of an explicit theory of language. Ursula Oppenberg's study of Schlegel's translations from the Sanskrit finds that there are transcription errors in the hand-copying of manuscripts in Paris by Hamilton, his partner and the library's curator Louis Matthieu Langlès (1763-1824), and Schlegel; her study, however, is concerned with the strictly philological, not the philosophical. The aim of the present analysis is not to find evidence of the accuracy of Schlegel's Sanskrit translations – which for the most part are considered excellent, although many scholars note that August Wilhelm's command of Sanskrit was superior – but to illustrate how his commentary on several Sanskrit texts helps to foster misconceptions about Asian religions. While Friedrich Schlegel does continue the tradition of locating the origins of the Germans in India, in <u>On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians</u> he finds Hinduism and Buddhism to be essentially nihilist, thus establishing a viewpoint about Asian religion that will prove detrimental to the interpretation of religious texts well into the twentieth century.

Book I of <u>On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians</u>, "Von der Sprache" [On Language], which presents evidence of Sanskrit's relationship with Greek, Latin,

Persian, and Germanic tongues, attracted most enduring attention among scholars, inaugurating the fields of "Indology" and historical-comparative Indo-European philology in Germany. Building on the foundations of Jones's "Third Anniversary Discourse," Schlegel likewise shuns conjectural etymology; however, he places increasing emphasis, not just on grammatical structure generally, as did Jones, but more specifically on the roots of verbs and the forms of grammar. As Michael J. Franklin notes in the introduction to his English translation of Schlegel's text:

> for Schlegel, similarity of structure indicated commonality of origin, and hence also commonality of essence or spirit, whereas similarity of roots indicated the belated intermingling of languages that have originated separately and that share a mere contiguity of material existence (Franklin xii).

It was in this context that Schlegel introduced the term "comparative grammar," based on the analogy of comparative anatomy, as well as the genealogical concept of family trees for languages. In considering that Sanskrit itself was the Indo-European *Ursprache* rather than its descendant, however, Schlegel was responsible for an error that Jones had avoided thirty years earlier. Sanskritist Madhav Deshpande notes that pre-500 BC Vedic is largely incomprehensible and that European Indologists were easily misled in trying to find in it cognates with European languages because of ancient Vedic's plethora of regional folk etymologies.[27]

Schlegel advocates in his preface that the study of Indian literature should be embraced by teachers and students to the extent to which Greco-Roman culture ignited scholars in Germany and Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, using the term "Oriental Renaissance" that he had coined in 1803 and from which Schwab takes the title of his book. Schlegel predicts that a short time invested in the study of Indian culture in the nineteenth century, with energy equal to that expended in the Renaissance, would prove no less grand and universal for the European mind. He argues that the form of all wisdom and science, and almost of the world itself, would be changed and renovated by the influence of knowledge that will be understood as not new but re-awakened. He states that the structure of Sanskrit indicates a clear and profound understanding of human consciousness early in the history of mankind, for the Indian language,

> die selbst in ihren ersten und einfachsten Bestandtheilen die höchsten Begriffe der reinen Gedankenwelt, gleichsam den ganzen Grundriß des Bewußtseins nicht bildlich, sondern in unmittelbarer Klarheit ausdrückt (USWI 63).[lviii]
>
> Dieß feine Gefühl mußte dann mit der Sprache selbst zugleich auch Schrift hervorbringen; keine hieroglyphische nach äußern Naturgegenständen mahlende oder bildernde, sondern eine solche, welche den innern Charater der

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[lviii] Even in its simplest form, exemplifies the loftiest ideas of the pure world of thought, and displays the entire ground plan of consciousness, not in figurative symbols, but with unmediated clarity (Franklin 454).

> Buchstaben, wie er so deutlich gefühlt ward, nun auch in sichtlichen Umrißen hinstellte und bezeichnete (ibid 42-43).[lix]

Schlegel finishes the section by stating that scarcely any language in the world can be found, no matter how geographically or culturally remote, in which German does not have roots, thus exemplifying the great distances of the migrations of the Teutonic race, or, one might say, his subscription to a good deal of lazy argument by analogy.

In Book II, "Von der Philosophie" [On Philosophy], Schlegel surveys Indian philosophy critically, his attempts at objectivity overshadowed by his growing Christian sentiments. Here he goes on to develop the theme of the beauty and antiquity of Sanskrit and of its aptitude for expressing philosophical ideas. His writings now, however, begin to belie his mistrust of the philosophical systems he uncovers. He maintains that the ancient Hindus possessed a knowledge of the true God, but that an original revelation had been obscured and sullied by pantheism, polytheism, and the Indian system of emanation (the theory that all derived or secondary things flow from the primary), producing fatalism, determinism, moral stupefaction, and intellectual indolence. The optimism and belief in universal progress that he reveals in Book I, gives way to a discourse of deterioration in Book II. This may be a result, in part, of the fact that the Indian Puranic tradition, which is

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[lix] This fine perception of the value of sounds and syllables would produce a system of writing almost simultaneously with the spoken language; not mere hieroglyphic paintings, or images copied from the external forms of nature, but a system in which the innermost nature of the letters, already so clearly sensed, now might also be indicated or sketched out in the mind by visible outlines (ibid. 446).

part of the philosophy he treats, itself saw the world as subject to a process of progressive deterioration.[28]

In reading Sanskrit literature, Schlegel tends to see only the emphasis on the Shaivic, and this not as part of a cycle of decay and re-emergence, but as an end in itself. In his discussion of the Manu-Samhita, for example, Schlegel argues:

> Was die Dichter der Alten in ein zelnen Sprüchen von dem Unglück des Daseins fingen, jene traurigen Strahlen einer durchaus furchtbaren Welt-Ansicht, die sie in tiefbedeutenden Trauerspielen aus dem Gedanken eines dunkeln Schicksals über die Sagen und Geschichten von Göttern und Menschen verbreiten, sammle man sich in Ein Bild und allumfassendes Ganzes, und verwandle das vorübergehende dichterische Spiel in bleibenden ewigen Ernst, so wird man am besten das Eigenthümliche der alten indischen Ansicht aufgefakt haben (ibid. 100).[lx]

He states that in the cosmogony of Manu one already finds traces of materialism, a clue for tracing the progress of degeneracy from spiritual ideas to an entirely materialist worldview. He argues that in all the ancient Indian texts, one witnesses the "primitive error" of mistaking man, the "blind and senseless instrument" of

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[lx] If all that has been sung by poets of antiquity concerning the misery of created existence be assembled into one image and under one comprehensive form; if we collect each melancholy gleam and fearful conception of the world around, which, born of that gloomy idea of irrevocable destiny, pervades the poetical legends and histories of their gods, and breaks forth in deep-souled tragedies, changing the play of poetical imagery and diction into an enduring and eternal sadness, we shall gain the most perfect conception of the peculiar characteristics of this ancient Indian doctrine (Franklin 470).

divinity, for the free operation and comprehension of divine truth. He finds that the most important periods of Indian, and indeed of all Asian, philosophy and religion are the periods that see the diffusion of the doctrine of Emanation, which eventually degenerates into astrological superstition and fanatic materialism, and the doctrine of Dualism, which is eventually transformed into Pantheism. He argues that among all the systems of philosophy to have come out of Asia, none are so positively of Indian origin or as old as the doctrines of Emanation and Metempsychosis:

> Wo diese Seelenwanderung nicht bloß physisch gemeint, sondern mit der Meinung von der moralischen Verderbniß und Unseeligkeit aller Wesen, und nothwendigen Reinigung und Rückkehr zu Gott verbunden ist, da ist sie sicher aus diesem System entlehnt, und also indischen Ursprungs. Auf diese Weise finden wir in der Lehre des Pythagoras den Begriff der Metempsychose mit allen seinen orientalischen Nebenbestimmungen zum sichern Beweise, daß es keine hellenische Erfindung war, obgleich bald hernach mit hellenischem Geist und Scharfsinn angeeignet und umgebildet; man müßte dann auch die ältesten und verhaltnißmäßig besten Nachrichten von der pythagorischen Lehre ganz verwerfen wollen (ibid. 112).[lxi]

[lxi] This Metempsychosis, wherever it is not viewed in a merely physical light, but as closely connected with a belief in the moral ruin and abasement of all created beings, is unquestionably of Indian origin, springing from the belief in emanation, and inculcating the necessity of repentance and purification as the terms of reunion with the Supreme Being. Thus the doctrine of the Metempsychosis, with all its Oriental accompaniments embodied in the teaching of Pythagoras, proves his philosophy to have been no Hellenistic invention, although it was soon developed and adorned with

Here again we find the arguments of the Roman writers renewed: that the most ancient sages of Greece in fact had filched their revelations from India.

Schlegel oscillates in Book II between discussions of emanation, metempsychosis, dualism, pantheism, immorality, and materialism. It is almost as if his disbelief of the "errors" in his texts keeps him from being able exhaustively to discuss one issue before moving on to the next. He finds that the doctrine of Emanation can be understood most favorably when considered as a system of reunion with the divine essence, in which the divine origin of man is continually inculcated to stimulate and animate his efforts to return, and incite him to consider a reunion and re-incorporation with divinity as the one primary object of every action and exertion. He goes on to state, however, that the doctrine of Emanation is intelligible only as a perverted conception of revealed truth.

Schlegel traces the play of positive and negative forces, the *sattvic* and *tamasic*, in the earliest forms of Indian Pantheism to the later alterations and "debasement" of Dualism, arguing that Pantheism leads to the rejection of the difference between right and wrong. He argues, however, that with the doctrine of Emanation, the world is mistakenly viewed as degraded and that as a result only the realm of the Creator is divine bliss. He finds that the persistence of such an erroneous notion is due to its systematic connections throughout Hinduism, as is true with

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all the riches of Hellenistic genius and ingenuity. We must, then, also be prepared completely to reject the oldest and proportionately best accounts of Pythagorean philosophy (ibid. 476).

Hindu conceptions of what it means to break the cycle of material re-birth, which Schlegel mistakenly refers to as "immortality":

> Der nicht bloße Wahrscheinlichkeit war, durch langes Nachdenken allmählig gefunden, oder ferne Dichtung von einer unbestimmten Schattenwelt, sondern feste und klare Gewißheit, so daß der Gedanke des andern Lebens herrschender Bestimmungsgrund aller Handlungen in diesem ward. Ziel und Seele der ganzen Verfassung, aller Gesetze und Einrichtungen, bis auf die geringsten Gebräuche (ibid. 103).[lxii]

He derives the "demoralization" of divinity from an overemphasis on the decay of the material, falling in line with the tradition of associating Shiva with Dionysus:

> In der aus sehr verschiedenen Bestandtheilen zusammengesetzten und durch manche Stufen allmählig gebildeten Religion der Indier, nimmt die Unbetung der wilden Naturkraft aber eine nur allzu große Stelle ein. Bald als allvernichtende Zerstörung aufgefaßt, bald als Zeugungskraft der Natur als eines unendlichen Thieres, beitet uns der Dienst des Sivo, und der furchtbare Durga, Bilder des Todes und der Wollust, blutige Menschenopfer und bakchantische Zügellosigkeit in einem grauseen Gemisch dar. Was diesen

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[lxii] [Immortality] was not with them a mere probability, deduced gradually, the result of long study and reflection; not some vague imagining of an undefined and shadowy world, but a conviction so certain and decided, that the idea of a future life became the ruling motive and impulse of all actions in this; the grand aim and object of all laws and arrangements, carried out even in the most trifling details (ibid. 472).

> Naturdienst und Materialismus so schrecklich macht, und von der bloßen Sinnlichkeit mancher Völker um Zustande der einfachsten Wildheit noch so sehr unterscheidet, dürfte gerade die beigemischte und überall einverwebte Idee des Unendlichen sein, die noch auf den bessern Ursprung zurück deutet; denn grade das Höchste und Edelste wird immer, wenn es verwildert und entartet, zur schrecklichten Misgestalt (ibid. 118-19).[lxiii]

He argues that a similar veneration of the physical strength and vigor of nature was vital to Greco-Roman mythology, although it was not systematized throughout their religious beliefs in so fully developed and interconnected a form. Taking his lead from Herodotus, he also reaches back to the intermediary Egyptians to explain that the suffering god Osiris is best explained by reference to the Indian belief in the misery of the natural world, and the deep degradation in which its original light and purity had become involved.[29]

[lxiii] The wild adoration of mere physical strength holds a far too important place in the various different elements out of which the religion of the Hindus gradually developed itself. It is presented under two characters; sometimes as an inexhaustible creative power, and sometimes as an all-annhilating principle of destruction, and is thus embodied in the worship of Shiva, and of the terrific Durga. Images of death and pleasure, intermingling in horrible combination Bacchantic licentiousness and bloody human sacrifices. The idea of eternity, interwoven with the general plan of this philosophy, and ever pointing backwards to a holier origin, invested the nature-worship and materialism of the Orientals with a peculiarly fearful character, far different from the mere sensuality which reigned in the religion of many wild and uncivilised nations; for the most frightful errors are too frequently produced by the perversion and demoralisation of the loftiest and noblest principles (ibid. 479).

Schlegel writes that the peculiar affinity of Indian and European idealism consists principally in the opinion that activity, life, and freedom can alone be recognized as actually effective in their operation, and that inertia and inactivity are condemned as utterly void and ineffective. He otherwise ignores, however, any emphasis not only on the Vishnaivic – the subtle essence that maintains life, but on the Brahmanic – the creative element – in Sanskrit literature, conceding in his only mention of the Puranas that they emphasize the role of Vishnu:

> Es ist das erste System, das an die Stelle der Wahrheit trat; wilde Erdichtungen und grober Irrthum, aber überall noch Spuren der göttlichen Wahrheit und der Ausdruck jenes Schrektens und jener Betrübniß, die der erste Abfall von Gott zur Folge haven mußte (ibid. 107).[lxiv]

He seems to feel that Indian thought is still reeling from this initial loss: "Der Begriff von der Zwecklosigkeit der Welt und einer blos spielenden Thätigkeit Gottes, hängt wesentlich zusammen mit jener Ansicht eines ewigen Kreislaufs" (ibid. 116).[lxv]

Schlegel argues that in Asian countries other than China, which he still finds to be pantheistic, Buddhist doctrines are drawn from the worship of Shiva in

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[lxiv] The Indian mythology and philosophy is the first system which was substituted for the pure light of truth: notwithstanding some lingering traces of a holier origin, wild inventions and savage errors everywhere predominate, and an impression of anguish and sorrow, naturally resulting from the first rejection of, and estrangement from, revealed truth (Franklin 473).

[lxv] The idea of the absence of any specific design in the creation of the world, and of a merely capricious activity on the part of the Creator, is intimately connected with that of a ceaseless alternation and revolution (ibid. 477).

particular. This belief appears to be based on his own inference, since he finds the practices of the Yogis and Buddhist teachers to be "spirit-crushing martyrdom"; however, it is unclear what Buddhist texts he has read. He comments that Buddhism "denn, wenn vor dem bloß abstracten und negativen Begriff des Unendlichen alles andre erst vernichtet und verschwunden ist, so entflieht er zuletzt selbst, und löst sich in Nichts auf, weil er ursprünglich leer und ohne Inhalt war" (ibid. 141),[lxvi] and laments that

> das lebendige tiefe Gefühl des Unendlichen und seiner Fülle der Allmacht, schon sehr geschwächt und verdunstet sein muß, ehe es sich in diefen vom Nichts schwer zu unterscheidenden Schatten und Scheinbegriff des Einen und Allen auflösen kann (ibid.)[lxvii]

At the end of Book II, Schlegel marks both the philosophical link he sees between Asia and Europe and the apparent problem of belief in religions that emphasize the transcendence of material form:

> Alle andre orientalische Lehrbegriffe gründen und berufen sich noch auf göttliche Wunder und Offenbarung, so entstellt auch alles durch Fabel und

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[lxvi] A doctrine, which supposes every object in creation to be thus nullified and absorbed into an abstract and negative conception of the Eternal, is too thoroughly visionary and untenable to subsist for more than a very brief period (ibid. 489).

[lxvii] The profound and vital idea originally entertained of the Eternal and his almighty power, must have been greatly vitiated and enfeebled before it could descend to lose itself in the false and visionary notion of the oneness or unity of all things, so distant too from the doctrine of their nullity (ibid. 489-90).

> Irrthum sein mag. Der Pantheismus ist das System der reinen Vernunft, und insofern macht er schon den Uebergang von der orientalischen Philosophie zur europäischen. Er schmeichelt dem Eigendünkel des Menschen eben so sehr als seiner Trägheit. Ist einmal diese große Entdeckung gemacht, diese alles umfassende, alles vernichtende, und doch so leichte Wissenschaft und Vernunft-Weisheit, daß Alles Eins sei, gefunden, so dedarf es weiter keines Suchens und Forschens; alles was andre auf andren Wegen wissen oder glauben, ist nur Irrthum, Täuschung und Verstandesschwäche, so wie alle Veränderung und alles Leben ein leerer Schein (ibid. 141-42).[lxviii]

In Book III, "Historische Ideen" [Historical Ideas], Schlegel acts the anthropologist and depicts Indian sages descending from the roof of the world to found empires that would civilize the West. He argues that the most powerful nations of the globe sprang from one stock, colonies of original India. This is to be proved by the one monument we possess from earliest Indian history, older and more authentic than any other set forth in words or recorded in written characters – the Indian mode of government:

[lxviii] All other Oriental doctrines, however disguised by error and fiction, are founded in, and dependent on, divine and marvellous revelations; but Pantheism is the offspring of unassisted reason, and therefore marks the transition from the Oriental to the European philosophy. It is no less flattering to the self-conceit of man than to his indolence. When once men have arrived at the conclusion that all is unity, an opinion at once so comprehensive and all-annihilating, further research or investigation is deemed superfluous; every thing that is divine, drawn from other sources, or believed in by other men, appears, to their superficial reasoning, to be merely the delusive folly of superstition, and even life itself, with its mutations, is, in their eyes, but a fallacious and unsubstantial semblance of reality (ibid. 490).

> Gesetz also, nicht bloß der äussere Drang der Noth, sondern irgend ein wunderbarer Begriff von der hehen Würde und Herrlichkeit des Nordens, wie wir ihn in den indischen Sagen überall verbreitet finden, habe sie nordwärts geführt, so würde sich der Weg der Germanischen Stämme von Turkhind längst dem Gihon bis zur Nordseite des caspischen Meers und des Kaukasus leicht nachweisen lassen (ibid. 194).[lxix]

Such tribes would then follow the rivers that would lead them to Europe. However, while Schlegel feels that comparative grammar decides once and for all that Sanskrit is the oldest language and mother of all others, particularly Gothic and Anglo-Saxon, Deshpande and Hook point out the many historical influences on Sanskrit, especially from the Dravidian languages of the South.[30] We might remember that in the Ramayana, Rama is described as the conqueror of the wild Southern tribes, who absorbs their culture, much like the historical "Aryans."

The intent of Schlegel's book was in keeping with the tendency among the German Romantics, so remarked upon by Berman, to infuse philosophy, mythology, mystical theology, and poetry into linguistic questions. When we look at Book I of the work, it is not at all surprising to find that a disciple of Herder and Fichte would, in 1808, point to the origin of poetic invention in the "inner life" of the poets and

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[lxix] Admitting, then, that these tribes were driven northwards, not from the mere impulse of necessity, but by an almost supernatural idea of the majesty and glory of those regions, and everywhere diffused throughout the Indian sagas, the path of the Teutonic race may clearly be traced from Turkind along the Gihon to the north shore of the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus (ibid. 514).

would perceive among the ancients a fusion of intellectual refinement and the sublime. In Book II, however, Schlegel ultimately fails to locate the unity and purity he sought in ancient Indian culture, emphasizing in Book III that he finds in the Judeo-Christian tradition a more convincing synthesis of letter and spirit, one which mediates between Oriental and Occidental thought.

Despite this defect, Schlegel has received acclaim as the founder of the comparative enterprise of linguistic typology, particularly for his work in <u>On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians</u>. Schlegel argues in Book I that there is a distinct difference between organic, inflected languages, such as Sanskrit or Greek, and mechanical, non-inflected languages, an argument that runs parallel to August Wilhelm's distinction between organic and mechanical form in his celebrated lectures on dramatic art and literature, <u>Vorlesungen über schöne Literatur und Kunst</u> [Lectures on Literature and Fine Art] (1804). Franklin notes that the cultural-political implications of Schlegel's discrimination between organic and mechanical languages ensured that "Indo-Germanic" was destined to become more than a term indicating a particular type of linguistic interest. The ramification of Jones's "Third Anniversary Discourse" had energized linguistic and "racial" interconnections between India and Germany, encouraging Schlegel to link his revival of Gothic medievalism with his claims for an Oriental heritage. This has led a few moderately influential twentieth-century scholars, however much some of them may themselves by slighted these days – such as Bernal, Poliakov, Said, and Schwab – to charge Schlegel with racism. To

make an accusation of this sort, however, despite Schlegel's anthropologically problematic third section, suggests ulterior scholarly motives and does not take into account the context in which the work was written. We must remember that Schlegel and the other early German India scholars relied upon the publications of the British Orientalists and that Germany was in a very different position in 1808 than was England, as will be taken up in the next chapter. In terms of orientalism, one sees in Germany quite the reverse of the English model. Germany was not colonizing other foreign countries, imposing on them its own culture; it had yet to be a nation itself. Instead, "Germany" was experiencing forms of internal colonialism, bound up in the political climate and nationalist debates of its own scholarship. What is troubling about Schlegel's <u>On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians</u> is not that it may be construed as racist; it is that the work lays groundwork for later scholars to view Indian thought, and Asian philosophy generally, as nihilist.

Schlegel's <u>On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians</u> was a major step in the "colonization" of Germany by Indian ideas. Avestan scholar James Darmesteter (1849-1894) maintained, in his <u>Essais orientaux</u> [Oriental Essays] (1883), that he had scarcely ever seen, outside the manifesto of Du Bellay, the equivalent of Schlegel's essay in literary history. That is to say that, just as Du Bellay had affirmed the legitimacy of literature in the French vernacular, Darmesteter found Schlegel to have affirmed the place of German in linguistic history by associating it with the profound and ancient philosophical ideas of India. Immediately after reading Schlegel's work,

Schelling, setting aside rather strong dogmatic objections, wanted to found an oriental academy, in Munich, presided over by Schlegel himself. Other German writers were less enthusiastic, however. Goethe [as well as Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) later] found Schlegel continually apologetic, and instantly criticized his book. The devout interest that Goethe had shown in his youth for Biblical traditions was directed in his late years to other oriental mythologies and to the concept of *Weltliteratur* [World Literature]; his own orientalism, however, would never travel east of Persia, as is to be seen in his West-Östlicher Divan [Divan of East and West] (1819). Since he felt no linguistic or racial affinity with the Hindus, and seems to have been disdainful of the rowdy agitation of German patriots, Goethe's observations were *ungemässige*, that is, out of step with the younger Romantic generation. Schlegel, on the other hand, crystallized the German passion for the Orient that had by then been developing for decades. He would in fact attempt to "faire de la critique une science et de la traduction un art" (Berman 112)[lxx] in the hope of formulating a concept of wisdom – part rationalism and part ineffable spirituality – that would have an impact on the national destiny. Schlegel thus seeks to imbue the nationalism that had begun with Herder with a much more profound – if misguided – spirituality.

Schwab explains Schlegel's relationship to On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians as having created a cultural movement out of one particular field of interest:

[lxx] Make criticism a science and translation an art.

> parce qu'il y voyait d'abord un événement spirituel. La recontre de trois facteurs essentiels dans son esprit l'y prédestinait: ses antécédents de sérieux historien allemand; – sa vénération de romantique pour un Orient préalable qui déciderait de l'avenir littéraire de l'Europe; – surtout sa foi, qui avait choisi de tout rapporter à l'intérêt religieux (Schwab 80).[lxxi]

While Poliakov overstates the extent to which Schlegel fails to make distinctions between criteria of language and criteria of race, Schlegel does tend to describe national characteristics – in relation to blood, spirit, origin, race, and religion – as pure. Schlegel also emphasizes the linguistic, cultural, and racial importance of Persia in the alleged line from India to Germany. While previous ancient and medieval European writers cited above had placed Egypt (or Israel) between India and Germany historically, and orientalists such as Anquetil-Duperron and Jones had emphasized the importance of Persia, Schlegel's placement of Persia in a history that leads from India to Germany will prove influential for later thinkers, such as Hegel. Be this as it may, Schlegel's enduring importance in the history of linguistic science rests securely upon the new methodological perspectives and techniques embodied in his work. His comparative scientific approach can be seen to have fostered three key areas of nineteenth-century language research: the comparative linguistics of Franz

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[lxxi] because he saw [his book] as a spiritual event. The convergence of three essential factors in his mind made it predestined: his background as a serious German historian, his Romantic veneration for an Orient whose precedents would determine the literary future of Europe, and, above all, his faith, which led him to choose to relate everything to religious interests.

Bopp, the historical linguistics of Jakob Grimm, and the typological linguistics of Wilhem von Humboldt.

Among his other activities, Schlegel was a novelist, a historian, and a diplomat, but was not in any sense an extreme German nationalist. He campaigned in favor of Jewish emancipation, and historians in Nazi Germany were to fault him for it. He thought that the Egyptians had been enlightened by the Indians and founded a colony in Judea; however, he found the Jews to be only partly indoctrinated because they did not believe in metempsychosis. In this way Schlegel paid tribute to Voltaire, but it was a tribute that clearly showed that he remained mid-way between the tradition of the Enlightenment and whole-hearted German Romanticism.[31] His critique of Enlightenment rationalism and materialism was ultimately to atrophy into alignment with the forces of the Restoration in Vienna, as he combined Christian orthodoxy with political conservatism in Metternich's government.

The first enthusiastic follower of Friedrich Schlegel's ideas was his older brother August Wilhelm, who wrote in 1804: "If the regeneration of the human species started in the east, Germany must be considered the Orient of Europe."[32] Despite following his brother into an Indian obsession, August Wilhelm's interest in India seems to have been rather more inspired by Karl August's travels on the subcontinent. He in fact offered tribute to his elder brother's endeavors in a poem from 1787, "Bestattung des Brahminen. Eine Phantasie an meinem Bruder in Ostindien" [Funeral of the Brahmins: A fantasy to my brother in East India], which

proved eerily prophetic in its evocation of premature death.[33] In 1795, August Wilhelm had married Caroline Böhmer, daughter of the Göttingen orientalist Johann David Michealis (1717-1791). With Friedrich Schlegel's abandonment of Sanskrit literature for Christianity, the baton of Sanskrit now passed to August Wilhelm, who was to hold the first German chair in the subject, at the University of Bonn, beginning in 1818. His publication of the Indische Bibliothek [Indian Library] (1820-1830) contained articles by scholars such as Bopp and other later English India scholars. August Wilhelm's contributions to German Indian Studies proved sound, with fewer of the incendiary and mistaken notions to be found in his brother's 1808 work.

A. W. Schlegel would also prove to be a key player in the transmission of German Romantic ideas and works to France and England, whose writers themselves had inspired Germans in the 1780s and '90s. Schlegel was largely responsible for the happy foreign reception of Goethe, as well as of Friedrich's work, through his own university lectures Über dramatische Kunst und Literatur [On Dramatic Art and Literature] (1809-11), in which he emphasized the end of classicism and the advent of Romanticism. He insisted on the existence of a cultural gulf between ancient and medieval Romantic literature and between the pagan South of Europe and the Christian North, an idea that was later to influence authors such as Thomas Mann. He also argued against the prevalent obedience to poetic constraints and introduced the idea of the Middle Ages as the province of Romantic poetry. His message was reinforced by Germaine de Staël's De l'Allemagne, a cultural history that, as noted

earlier, praised the work of Herder and was to determine what France thought about Germany until the two countries went to war in 1870. In her encyclopedic work, the German principalities appear as a cohesive society of metaphysical poets, with Goethe having established Weimar as the center of Romanticism.

De Staël's overpraise of the Germans, however, is to some extent surprising since both Schlegel brothers were such outspoken critics of French Neo-classicism. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, when the linguistic and cultural patriotism of their countrymen was transforming itself into a kind of Pan-Germanism, Friedrich Schlegel wrote – as thinkers like von Gunzberg, Herder, and Klopstock had already argued – that Europe owed everything to the Germanic migrations. He went so far as to argue that Latin characters were unworthy for printing translations of Hindu works and wanted to adapt the Nibelungenleid, "rediscovered" only a few decades earlier, into an Indo-Germanic epic. In 1806, Schlegel wrote to Schleiermacher, "I feel it clearly how it is my sole calling to be a writer, author and historian of my nationality."[34] By 1819, Schlegel was using the term "Aryan" as had Anquetil-Duperron, justifying his choice by connecting the Sanskrit root *arya* ("noble") with the German word *Ehre* ("honor"). Yet, the very linguistic scholars who Schlegel's work had inspired, such as Franz Bopp, who in 1833 found good reasons for preferring *indo-europäisch*, disputed the term *indo-germanisch*.

Although the terms "Aryan" and "Indo-German" were not yet used in On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians, the work was published in the same year –

1808 – as a seminal work of German nationalism: Fichte's Reden an die deutsche Nation [Addresses to the German Nation]. During the Napoleonic period, Fichte had become an ardent nationalist, urging the German people to assert themselves against foreign domination. While Fichte had supported the ideals of the French Revolution, he claimed that he did not see the true significance of it until his discovery of Kant's moral philosophy: he felt that Kant had established the autonomy of human beings as individual selves, while the French Revolution established the autonomy of human beings as a collective. He condemned the violence that followed the revolution, however, and in his sarcastic fourth discourse he called for an end to the role of languages derived from Latin, especially French. Fichte had written a year earlier that "the distinction between the Prussians and other Germans is artificial, founded on institutions established arbitrarily or by chance. The distinction between the Germans and other European nationalities is founded on nature."[35] Fichte borrows this idea from Herder: that the members of a nationality are joined together by a cultural spirit, which itself is grounded by the preservation of the mother tongue. Fichte felt that "a nationality is the totality of human beings continually living together in society and constantly perpetuating themselves both bodily and spiritually, and this totality is subject to a certain specific law through which the divine develops itself."[36]

Fichte's views on nationality and freedom had been prefigured more than a decade earlier by his magnum opus, the Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre [Foundations of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre] (1794), which had attempted to

deduce a conception of the natural world based on human freedom, which would in turn establish a metaphysics of the causality of freedom. Gillespie sums up the argument: "Fichte's practical goal is a radicalization of the Cartesian project for the conquest of nature that has as its end not the physical well-being of individual human beings but the liberation of humanity from nature altogether and the consequent establishment of a realm of universal human freedom and power."[37] The basic principle of right that Fichte formulates from this is posited as the limitation of one's freedom so that others can also be free. He argues there must be a "primordial right," which entitles people to censure others who violate this *Urrecht*.[38] For Fichte, freedom can be achieved only under the totalitarian leadership of an educated elite of scholars (who will presumably argue about their primordial rights).

In Herderian terms, however, he argues that this primordial right will be different for each nation. According to Fichte, the original society was a superior race under the leadership of divinely inspired dictators and Germany is the inheritor of this destiny in his age. The triumph of Germany in Fichte's view is in the interest of humanity, for Germany, like the scholar, is an agent of freedom.[39] He makes it clear in the opening of his seventh address that "es sind in den vorigen Reden angegeben, und in der Geschichte nachgewiesen die Grundzüge der Deutschen, als eines Urvolks, und als eines solchen, das das Recht hat, sich das Volk schlechtweg,

im Gegensatz mis andern von ihm abgerissenen Stämmen zu nennen" (Reden 106).[lxxii]

Fichte's addresses galvanized young Germans as Prussia was collapsing. He ascribed all the peoples of Europe, excepting the Slavs, to Germanic stock, but drew a distinction between the "primary race" (*Urvolk*) and the "neo-Latin peoples" who were deficient, de-Germanized and had been rendered culturally sterilized through the loss of the "primeval language" (*Ursprache*).[40] He was one of the first to question whether Jesus was of Semitic stock, based on the lack of a genealogy derived from David in the Gospel of St. John, thus discrediting New Testament genealogies just as Old Testament ones had been discredited by Lutheran theologians. This idea eliminated the greatest obstacle in the quest for an authentically German religion.[41]

For the Jena Romantics, however – in particular Novalis, Schelling, and Friedrich Schlegel – Christianity still held answers that Hinduism and Buddhism could not provide. In the end the ideas of Asian religions, though endowed with primordial characteristics, only figure as precursors to the true answers to be found in the New Testament. Ultimately, the questions whether doctrines such as metempsychosis were closer to the philosophy of Spinoza than to that of Kant became moot as their unbridled enthusiasm for an alterative to Greece and Rome

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[lxxii] In the preceding addresses we have indicated and proved from history the characteristics of the Germans as an original people, and as a people that has the right to call it self simply the people, in contrast to other branches that have been torn away from it (Jones and Turnbull 108).

brought them back to Judea. The analysis of the historical march of national spirits, however, would hold different conclusions for the opponents of Romanticism.

Chapter 4

GOALS WITHOUT GODS

"Огонь в умов человек и не в крыш домов."[lxxiii]

– Fyodor M. Dostoevsky, Бесы [Demons] (1872)

I

Hegel and Ahistorical India

Immediately preceding the publication of Schlegel's On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians and Fichte's Addresses to the German Nation, Der Phänomenologie des Geistes [The Phenomenology of Spirit] (1807) appeared. This was the first major work by G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831), who would both criticize the early Romantics and incorporate much of their thought into his own system. In his second major work, the Wissenschaft der Logik [Science of Logic], written between 1812 and 1816, one finds his own reformulation of transcendental idealism and the *Wissenschaftslehre*. While these two early works form the basis of his thought, it is his later lectures given while he was a professor at the University of Berlin between 1818 and 1831, particularly those lectures on history and aesthetics, that more directly concern Indo-German questions. Hegel's comments about India are to be found in his Vorlesungen über der Philosophie des Weltgeschichte [Lectures

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[lxxiii] The fire is in the minds of men and not in the roofs of houses.

on the Philosophy of World History] (1822-31) and in his Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik [Lectures on Aesthetics] (1818). While his insights into India and Indian art are determined by the march of spirit [*Geist*] about which he makes such grand statements, however, it should be understood that his sources are the commentaries on Sanskrit literature of his day and not knowledge of works of Indian art.[1]

According to Hegel, the Romantics emphasized a self-destructive obsession with emotional subjectivity to the point that they were either too ironic to commit themselves to aesthetic or philosophical positions or too paralyzed by the attempt to establish a unity of individual self and larger spirit. In The Phenomenology of Spirit he writes that the cycles of human history are indeed motivated by a freedom that is self-established. Such cycles are also, however, bound by the limitations of the human intellect. Unlike both Kant and Fichte, but like the early Romantics, Hegel does not postulate the existence of a state or a space that separates human beings from the absolute, which moves the universe and lies beyond human cognition. Hegel deduces his moral system by arguing that normative acts in a given place and time are governed by the movement of spirit at that place and time. Certain world-historical people, such as Napoleon, who are demonic destroyers, however, can subvert such behavior. For Hegel, however, these individuals can only, as it were, destroy constructively, just as, Shaivic devotees would argue, does Shiva. (This is to say that Shiva is the destroyer of ignorance, and that the absence of ignorance is to be seen to

lead to enlightenment.) For Hegel, demonic destroyers such as Napoleon occasionally wipe the slate clean, so to speak, doing away with ossified institutions so that progress can be made, if not under Napoleon himself then under subsequent regimes. Like Goethe's Faust, at least in Part 1, Hegel shows himself to be no Romantic, in so far as he sees the demonic destroyer as an agent of rationality. Ironically, it is thinkers outside of Romanticism, such as Goethe and Hegel, who largely, but by no means entirely, reject the Indo-German appeal, and who, at the same time seem to hold views truer to most Hindu conceptions of Shiva than those of the early Romantics. Hegel and Goethe present, in otherwise very different worldviews, what are ultimately theodicies, although neither could be described in any way as "deists." Evil and destruction are necessary parts of an overall equation of renewal, while the works of the Jena Romantics already discussed, whether they zealously tout the virtues of Hinduism or Christianity, emphasize liberation from the miseries of material incarnation as an end in itself.

In The Science of Logic, Hegel seeks to reconcile subject and object, and thus human autonomy and the natural world, through a dialectical demonstration that contradiction leads to a form of reason with fewer contradictions. Gillespie argues, though, "while Hegel appeared to provide a bulwark against the nihilism of Fichte and the early German Romantics, his philosophy of dialectical reason rested on an uncertain foundation because his synthesis of the absolute was speculative" (Gillespie

120). In effect, by basing his idealism on the speculative synthesis of contradiction, he accepts the Fichtean and Romantic emphasis on negation. While Hegel's philosophy, like Schelling's, is a philosophy of becoming, it is founded on the annihilation of annihilation, because, for Hegel, a negative plus a negative equals a positive. While such an axiom may hold in mathematics or physics, in metaphysics or religion, different rules obtain. Negatives in metaphysics, such as the concept of the void, are not necessarily discrete entities that can simply "add up" to something else. "Nihilism taken to its extreme in Hegel's view rebounds upon itself and reconstitutes itself as the most comprehensive order" (ibid. 115-17). Such a view would have profound ramifications for Hegelians at both the liberal and conservative ends of the political spectrum in the middle decades of the nineteenth century.

In The Philosophy of History, Hegel seeks to turn the notion of a Creator into a category of logic, for the Creator is replaced by the self-thinking spirit (found in The Phenomenology of Spirit), which is impelled by the need to resolve contradictions, so as to move to progressively higher planes of articulation (as in The Science of Logic). Hegel does not imbue man with the extreme subjective power that Fichte does; yet, his replacement of a divine creator with an impersonal collective spirit that "moves" man may be seen as yet another step toward the "deification of man." While Hegel describes the three great stages in Germanic history as extending from its Biblical beginnings to Charlemagne, from Charlemagne to the Reformation,

and from the Reformation to the period which finds its summation in his own philosophy, he finds that there is no periodization possible in Indian history because the Indians do not care about time and are, therefore, incapable of writing history. In contrast to the Chinese, who Hegel believes to note events very accurately,

> die Inder dagegen sind durch Geburt einer substantiellen Bestimmtheit zugeteilt, und zugleich ist ihr Geist zur Idealität erhoben, so daß sie der Widerspruch sind, die feste verständige Bestimmtheit in ihrer Idealität auf zulösen und anderseits diese zur sinnlichen Unterschiedenheit herabzusetzen. Dies macht sie zur Geschichtschreibung unfähig (PWG, II 357).[lxxiv]

Hegel, as is evident here, was fascinated with the Indian caste system; it was for him the prime example of the inertia and indifference he found in Indians as a people.

In Hegel's Philosophy of History, every nation's culture is described as reflecting its unique "national spirit," even if Hegel tends to rate them on a scale of historical progress. Toward the top of this scale would be Persia because he felt that imperial Persian politics signified the true beginning of history, which is to say that a nation without clearly noted political events is, for him, without history. (The fact that Hegel's historiography places the most emphasis on political events, rather than

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[lxxiv] The Hindoos on the contrary are by birth given over to an unyielding destiny, while at the same time their Spirit is exalted to Ideality; so that their minds exhibit the contradictory processes of a dissolution of fixed rational and definite conceptions in their Ideality, and on the other side, a degradation of this ideality to a multiformity of sensuous objects. This makes them incapable of writing History (Sibree 162).

the purely military or royal conflicts, may make him comparatively liberal in regard to historians of his day, however, such a view of history does not give great prominence to developments in cultural history, as will be seen in his views of Indian art.) Much further down the scale would be China and India, which, despite being the two great civilizations of the east, have little bearing on the more influential developments in Western history. While Hegel accepts the idea that India was the center of emigration into the western world, and that the spread of Indian culture is prehistorical, History is limited to that which marks off an essential epoch in the development of Spirit. He adds that, overall, the diffusion of Indian culture is only a dumb, deedless expansion, for it presents no political action.

Hegel presents India and China dialectically: China as equated with total objectivity and the complete lack of imagination, and India with fantastic, completely subjective irrationality. Hegel finds in Indian religion an "allgemeinen Vergöttlichung alles Endlichen und ebendamit Herabwürdigung des Göttlichen" (ibid. 354).[lxxv] Yet, it was exactly the archaic, the primitive, the irrational qualities of Indian culture that had appealed to the early German Romantics, for, following Rousseau and Herder, they associated the primitive with intuitive and sublime wisdom, as opposed to Goethe and Hegel who found the "irrationalism" of Indian

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[lxxv] Universal deification of all finite existence, and consequent degradation of the Divine (Sibree 141).

religion and Hindu art disturbing.[2] Hegel finds that such irrationalism leads to annihilation and self-deification:

> Sittlichkeit und menschliche Würde ist nicht vorhanden, die bösen Leidenschaften gehen darüber; der Geist wandert in die Welt des Traumes, und das Höchste ist die Vernichtung (ibid. 378). […] Die abstrakte Einheit mit Gott wird in dieser Abstraktion des Menschen zur Existenz gebracht (ibid. 406). […] Bei den Indern aber [diese abstraktion] ist dieselbe negativ gegen alles Konkrete gerichtet und das Höchste diese Erhebung, durch welche der Inder sich selbst zur Gottheit macht (ibid.).[lxxvi]

Such self-deification was evident for Hegel in the symbolism of Indian art, his views on which had been largely influenced by Georg Friedrich Creuzer (1771-1858), who was much more sympathetic than Hegel to Indian civilization. Creuzer elaborated on Schelling's initial steps toward establishing a modern Romantic interpretation of symbols as both being and signifying a particular idea. Creuzer had begun his study of the nature of ancient symbols with the idea that Christian art presented a "consonance of meanings," a clear language of signs which reveals spiritual messages to the believer, as opposed to the schools of Neoplatonic

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[lxxvi] Morality and human dignity are unknown; evil passions have their full swing; the Spirit wanders into the Dream-World, and the highest state is Annihilation. […] Abstract unity with God is realized in abstraction from humanity. […] Among the Hindoos [such abstraction] holds a negative position towards all that is concrete; and the highest state is supposed to be this exaltation, by which the Hindoo raises himself to deity (Sibree 148).

mysticism and medieval Christians, which found that icons, for example, held miraculous powers beyond normal human cognition. Creuzer, however, based his Symbolik und Mythologie der alten Volker [Symbolism and Mythology of Ancient Peoples] (1810) on the importance of Indian art, literature, religious morality, and mythology. He attempted to understand the meanings of Hindu art by interpreting its representations of Indian myths and symbols, an approach adopted by Hegel.

Like Winckelmann, both Creuzer and Hegel accepted the superiority of Greco-Roman art, distinguishing, however, between the translatability of Greek art's clear language and the mystical and supposedly unintelligible symbols of ancient Asian art. What is important about Creuzer, though, is the fact that he explains the multi-faceted image of the Mahesamurti Shiva as attempting to express the different concepts and stories associated with the many manifestations of Shiva, thus establishing for European historians of Asian art a means of understanding Hinduism and Buddhism's iconography. Hegel, on the other hand, focuses attention on the problem of assimilating Indian art in the light of the Greco-Roman canon of beauty. The "exaggerations" in Indian sculptures are explained in terms of contrast between extreme abstraction in Indian thought and its manifestation in art. For Hegel, Indian art had to furnish an essential contrast to the progress of classical art. It was thus condemned to remain always outside history – as static, immobile, and fixed for all eternity.[3]

In his section on poetry in his Aesthetics, he argues that a similar misunderstanding of the relationship between human beings and the divine hampers Sanskrit poetry:

> Das indische Epos ist in dieser Rücksicht zu dem eigentlich idealen Verhältnis der Götter und Menschen nicht hindurchgedrungen, indem auf dieser Stufe der symbolischen Phantasie die menschliche Seite in ihrer freien schönen Wirklichkeit noch zurückgedrängt bleibt und die individuelle Tätigkeit des Menschen teils als Inkarnation der Götter erscheint, teils überhaupt als das Nebensächlichere verschwindet oder als asketische Erhebung in den Zustand und die Macht der Götter geschildert ist (Ästhetik III, 151).[lxxvii]
>
> Besonders die beiden berühmtesten dieser Gedichte, der *Ramajana* und *Mahabharata*, legen uns ide Weltanschauung der Inder in der ganzen Pracht und Herrlichkeit, Verwirrung, phantastischen Unwahrheit und Zerflossenheit und ebenso umgekehrt in der schwelgenden Lieblichkeit und den individuellen, feinen Zügen der Empfindung und des Gemüts dieser geistigen Pflanzennaturen dar (ibid. 181).[lxxviii]

[lxxvii] The Indian epic has not been able to force its way to the properly ideal relation between gods and men [which, one is to understand the Homeric epic manages to do], because at this stage when the imagination is symbolic the human element in its free and beautiful actuality still remains repressed, and the action of human individuals either appears as an incarnation of the gods or disappears as merely something accessory or is described as an ascetic elevation into the life and power of the gods (Knox 1072).

Unlike the Homeric epic, which depicts deities as despicably human and certain human beings as distinctly super-human, the epics of these "plant-like beings"depict deities as exemplars who human beings attempt to emulate in the hope of freeing themselves from cyclic material existence.

Scholars, such as Pinkard, have seen Hegel as having drawn idealistic philosophy to a close by redirecting it. Hegel's Science of Logic was published in 1817, at the beginning of the phase of *Spätromantik* [Late Romanticism], which began after the Congress of Vienna. This period would see the emergence of those who felt themselves to be Hegel's successors. The Right Hegelians favored a conservative, theological interpretation of Hegel's thought and originally hoped to see the unity of God and the state realized in a liberal Germany; however, after the failure of the Revolutions of 1848-1851, they turned increasingly to Romantic nationalism. Left-wing Hegelians, such as Feuerbach, rejected the theological element in Hegel's thought, turning his dialectical methodology against the existing socio-political order. Feuerbach argued that "the divine essence is nothing other than the human essence or better: the essence of man, purified, freed from the limitations of the individual man" (Gillespie 126-27).

[lxxviii] Above all, the two most famous of these [Indian epic] poems, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, explain to us the entire outlook of the Indians in its whole splendour and magnificence, its confusion, fantastic flabbiness and lack of real truth, and yet, on the other hand, its overwhelming delightfulness and also the individual fine traits of the feeling and heart of these spiritual and plant-like beings (Knox 1095).

The perpetuation of the Indo-German mythology shifts in this period from the Early Romantics to those whom Thomas Mann calls in his Pariser Rechenschaft [Parisian Account] (1926) the "pure Romantics." Mann argues that Novalis and Schlegel ultimately made poor Romantics, for they belonged to the Enlightenment, while figures such as political journalist Joseph Görres (1776-1848) and folklorist and lexicographer Jacob Grimm (1785-1863) were genuine Romantics, for they were motivated by the idea of a great return to a past envisioned allegorically as a maternal night. Along these lines and following Achim von Arnim (1781-1831) and Clemens Brentano (1778-1842), Görres published a collection of German folk tales, Deutsche Volksbücher (1807). He also investigated Middle Eastern myths and edited an edition of the epic Lohengrin (1813). The founder of a new political Catholicism in Germany, Görres was at first a Jacobin, but later became a liberal nationalist when he became disenchanted with French Republicans. He then conceived a violent hatred for Napoleon; however, he was never able to produce a political philosophy, or even outline a poltical program that balanced the monarchical and democratic elements he found best in society. Eventually, Görres would abandon politics and return to what he was in fact best at: the study of ancient sagas and the history of mysticism.

Jacob Grimm and his brother, Wilhelm, published two volumes of Kinder- und Hausmärchen [Child and House Fairy Tales] (1812-1815) at the urging of von Arnim and Brentano, tales they claimed to have been collected orally from peasants in

Hesse. The Grimms felt that von Arnim and Brentano were too cavalier in interpreting the tales in their own work Des Knaben Wunderhorn [The Youth's Magic Horn] (1805-08). They therefore strove to present "what the ancient Germans had said in as unadulterated a form as possible" (Josipovici 3), to demonstrate that Germans shared a similar culture, and to advocate the unification process of the independent German duchies and principalities. In contrast to Tieck, who relied more on the Gothic tradition than folklore, the Grimms emphasized what they took to be oral tradition, building on the model created by Charles Perrault (1628-1703) and Madame d'Aulnoy (1650-1705) in France a century earlier. They believed that what had been lost of ancient German wisdom was only to be found in the surviving legends and songs of the common folk. Yet, the successive editions of the Grimm's tales (between 1812 and 1857) vary in drastic ways. So, "despite the Grimms' Romantic claim that they were preserving the precious seed of the *Volk* that was in imminent danger of disappearing, we can never get at a version that is absolutely authentic: every version will bear the imprint of the last speaker or compiler, no matter how neutral and scientific ones tries to be" (ibid. 4). Gabriel Josipovici feels that their initial 1812-1815 edition was the most closely rendered, for they moved further from it over time, as they geared their work more to children and thus had to water down the tales for propriety's sake. This may also be due to the fact that their initial tales were recorded in the severely nationalistic backlash against the

Napoleonic invasions, while the last 1857 edition saw a different set of underlying concerns having more to do with a retreat from the disappointments of politics into the world of children, a world made out to be extraordinarily innocent.

> What happened to the Grimm *Tales* in the course of fifty years of "revision" was that they were transformed from tales told by speakers who were deeply convinced that they were true (whatever meaning one assigns to that term) into tales told by writers (Wilhelm Grimm, in effect) who did not believe in them and therefore added scene-setting, morality and psychology to make them both attractive and meaningful (ibid.).

When the first edition of the tales was published, Grimm had already supported the theory that German folktales were coeval with the "original" German language in Über den altdeutschen Meistergesang [On the Old German Master Song] (1811). While Wilhelm was the more literary scholar of the two, Jacob turned to philology, producing the Deutsche Grammatik [German Grammar] (1819-37), in which he illustrates the changes in German by citing contrasting cognates in Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit. In his Deutsche Mythologie [German Mythology] (1835), fairy tales are traced to a pre-Christian Germany during a Golden Age, a period of now lost harmony. Poliakov describes at length those figures who "perfected the pseudo-scientific form of the Aryan myth" between 1820 and 1850, the most influential of whom may have been Grimm, who promoted the Indo-German or Hindu-Aryan myth

in his Geschichte der deutschen Sprache [History of the German Language] (1848).[4]

In France, specialists in Indian studies followed the lead of translators such as Anquetil-Duperron and began to translate the works of the English Indologists. Jones's Asiatick Researches was translated into French in 1803 and it was in Paris that the first European university chair of Sanskrit was inaugurated in 1816. Translations of the works of the German Indologists would not appear, however, until 1825, when Creuzer's Mythology was issued, followed in 1828 by Edgar Quinet's translation of Herder's Ideen, and in 1837 by Schlegel's On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians. The Indo-German "genealogy" opened up the possibility of co-existence between the revolutionary ideas of the 1830s and '40s and Roman Catholicism, which now hoped to recover from the Romantics' criticism of it and to re-establish itself among the general population. Poliakov argues that this Indo-Germanic "cosmogony" spread rapidly through France between 1817 and the 1850s in works such as those by zoologist and paleontologist Georges Cuvier (1769-1832) and by the historian Jules Michelet (1798-1874), who translated Grimm.[5]

Cuvier, who did much of the work with his rival Lamarck that would pave the way for evolutionary biology, was from Montbéliard, near the present German and Swiss borders and, though a French speaker, was influenced by German *Naturphilosophie*. Having devoted much of his career to establishing the science of compartive anatomy as a means of understanding any animal from any one of its

parts, he thus transfers his attention, at the end of this career, to man. The more extensive third edition of Cuvier's Recherches sur les ossemens fossiles des quadrupèds [Research on the Fossil Bones of Quadrupeds] (1825), to which his famous Discours sur les révolutions de la surface du globe [Discourse on the Revolutions of the Surface of the Globe] serves as the preface, deals extensively with ancient cultures, and applies to the idea of original cultures Cuvier's own argument that organisms do not evolve over time. "For it was in studying these revolutions that science joins on to history, and the history of nature becomes the history of man. The traditions of all early peoples confirm quite independently the geological evidence for a natural disaster standing at the beginning of recorded experience" (C. C. Gillespie 290). Drawing on Megasthenes and Ctesias, Cuvier asserts that Brahmin priests guarded the secret knowledge of writing and texts almost lost due to such a disaster, and that the nebulousness of ancient Indian history is due to the secrecy with which the Brahmins guarded their power. The net argument of this treatise is thus that original cultures – or *an* original culture – were already at a peak of moral development when they fell into oblivion and it behooves us to learn from their teachings.

While Cuvier sees history through the lens of evolutionary biology, Michelet saw is through that of moral progress. In Michelet's La Bible de l'humanité [Bible of Humanity] (1864), he attempts to redeem a moral ideal within "Aryan" religion that

must guide a new humanity on the path to the freedom of the spirit. This work – written at the height of a period in his work characterized by a persistent interest in morality (1861-1868) – presents a brand of spiritual historiography that sounds like a cross between Herdotus and Novalis. That is to say that, like Herodotus, Michelet sounds like a historian presenting more than slightly fantastical accounts of places, peoples, and events he has no firsthand knowledge of, and, in the spirit of Novalis, uses the metaphor of a love story – in this case between Isis and Osiris – to illustrate his argument. The argument is that, although the religions of darkness have vanquished those of light, the original strain of ethical exemplars, such as the Brahmin priests of ancient India, will return. This structure of paradise-fall-regain is to be found in at least four of Michelet's books from the 1860s, the final period of his writings, a falling back on mythologies for a man who would not get over the failures of 1848.[6]

For Michelet, this darkness is inevitable, if not necessary. For Hegel, it cannot exist independent of the light, however, together they bring about a brighter kind of light. For Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), the philosopher who disagreed with all of his contemporaries, especially Hegel, darkness was its own light.

II

Schopenhauer's Anti-theodicy

Schopenhauer was one of the most avid readers of the English publications on India discussed above. He may have been out of step with his contemporaries in the tradition of German idealism nevertheless his work can be seen as the consummation of the German indophilia that this study has attempted to explore. However, "Dann mag es auch wieder vorkommen, daß einer gegen seine Zeit steht, so daß seine Zeitzugehörigkeit sich nicht im großen Gemeinsamen ausdrückt, sondern durch den Gegensatz" argues Golo Mann.

> Es kann die Haltung eines Rebellen und Warners sein; auch wohl die eines Kauzes, der seine Bildung aus uralten Büchern schöpft und ruhig, in völliger Unabhängigkeit, sich das Treiben des Tages besieht, als gehörte er selber nicht dazu. Der Philosoph Arthur Schopenhauer war von der letzteren Art (Golo Mann 287).[lxxix]

This is true, and one could argue that Asian philosophy, which often emphasizes cultivating detachment from what Nietzsche will call the "all-too-human," would naturally appeal to one who was already detached in many ways, as was

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[lxxix] It also sometimes happens that some men who are at odds with their age show that they belong to it by the extent of their opposition to it. Some are rebels, others want to admonish and others still are eccentrics who obtain learning from ancient books and look quietly with complete detachment at their world, as though they themselves did not belong to it. The philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer belonged to the last category (Jackson 141).

Schopenhauer. His interest in Hindu and Buddhist topics began around the age of 25, just after he submitted his doctoral thesis at Jena University, "Über die vierfache Wurzel des Satzes vom zureichenden Grunde" [On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason]. His introduction to such ideas is thought to have occurred in late 1813, after the acceptance of this thesis, when he met Majer at the young philosopher's mother's salon in Weimar, then, with Heidelberg, one of the centers of what has come to be called *Hochromantik* [High Romanticism].

Schopenhauer first acquired a copy of Anquetil-Duperron's Oupnek'hat from Majer in the winter of 1813-14.[7] He writes in the preface to the first edition of the first volume of Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung [The World as Will and Representation] (1818), that he owes many of his ideas to Anquetil-Duperron and in Parerga und Paralipomena [Parerga and Paralipomena, or Essays and Aphorisms] (1851) extols the reverence with which Anquetil-Duperron rendered Dara Shukoh's Persian translation (SW V, 469). However, unlike Novalis and Schelling, he adds,

> Sosehr ich auch die religiösen und philosophischen Werke der Sanskritliteratur verehre, so habe ich dennoch an den poetischen nur selten einiges Wohlgefallen finden können; sogar hat es mich zuzeiten bedünken wollen, diese wären so geschmacklos und monstros wie die Skulptur derselben Völker (ibid. 467).[lxxx]

Schopenhauer's disdain for Sanskrit poetry and Indian art, however, runs counter to the profound impression made on him by Indian religions and philosophy. In his Handschriftliche Nachlass [Manuscript Remains], Schopenhauer makes references to the Asiatick Society's journal Asiatick Researches and Klaproth's Asiatisches Magazin, to Schlegel's On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians, as well as to many other works on Indian topics by figures such as Max Müller (1823-1900), perhaps the foremost German orientalist of the nineteenth century. At his death Schopenhauer had accumulated a library of at least 130 volumes on Asian topics (Janaway 178-179).[8] The Sanskrit text that Schopenhauer would initially become most familiar with through translations was the Upanishads. Schopenhauer's philosophy bears some resemblance to *Advaita* (non-dualism), the most prominent form of *Vedanta*.[9] Schopenhauer mentions only the teachings of the Upanishads generally as "Vedanta." Yet, some of his most important doctrines are mirrored in those of the Advaita school, with which he seems to have been acquainted through Windischmann's Sancara sive de Theologia Vedanticorum [Shankara, Or of Vedantic Theology] (1833), to which he refers in his Manuscript Remains and which Eduard Grisebach lists in his catalogue of titles in Schopenhauer's posthumous library.[10]

[lxxx] Much as I admire and respect the religious and philosophical works of Sanskrit literature, only rarely have I been able to find any pleasure in the poetical works. Indeed, at times it seemed to me that these were as inelegant and monstrous as is the sculpture of the same peoples (PP, II, 394).

Pinkard, who does not explicitly take into account Schopenhauer's indophilia, points out that, in the context of idealism, Schopenhauer ought to be taken as a post-Hegelian philosopher. This is due to the fact that his work was only widely recognized in the 1850s, at the end of his life and two decades after Hegel's death, although chronologically speaking his major work, The World as Will and Representation, was published around the same time as Hegel's 1817 Encyclopedia des Philosophische Wissenschaften [Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences] (Pinkard 333). One might add that Schopenhauer also saw himself as following Hegel, although he despised Hegel's work, just as he despised the work of most of his contemporaries. What Schopenhauer presented was an alternate path that idealism might have taken – for he advocated a return to Kant's three Critiques that ignored the works of Reinhold, Schulze, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel – a path that wed his own vision of transcendental idealism to the fascination for Indian ideas that the Early Romantics had begun. Unlike the Jena Romantics discussed in chapter three, however, Schopenhauer would not reject Hindu and Buddhist ideas later in life in favor of Christianity. The extent to which Hindu and Buddhist ideas inform his philosophy only deepens over time as more Sanskrit and Pali works become available in translation and Schopenhauer's own knowledge of them increases.

Based on his interpretation of Kant, and of Plato for that matter, Schopenhauer accepted the disjunction between the phenomena of the natural world and the

noumena that he felt lay within it. Schopenhauer thought Schelling's attempt to unify subject and object in his explanation of nature and human freedom was misguided, for he felt that there could be no unity of the material world and the Absolute, and in fact Schopenhauer's Absolute bears a much greater resemblance to *Brahman* than to any "absolute" found in German idealism. He argues in volume one,

> diese Darstellung, auf welche wir gekommen sind, indem wir dem konsequentesten der vom Objekt ausgehenden philosophischen Systeme, dem Materialismus, nachgingen, dient zugleich, die untrennbare gegenseitige Abhängigkeit bei nicht aufzuhebendem Gegensatz zwischen Subjekt und Objekt anschaulich zu machen; welche Erkenntnis darauf leitet, das innerste Wesen der Welt, das Ding an sich, nicht mehr in einem jener beiden Elemente der Vorstellung, sondern vielmehr in einem von der Vorstellung gänzlich Verschiedenen zu suchen, welches nicht mit einem solchen ursprünglichen, wesentlichen und dabei unauflöslichen Gegensatz behaftet ist (SW I, 67-68).[lxxxi]

[lxxxi] This explanation at which we have arrived by following materialism, the most consistent of the philosophical systems that start from the object, helps at the same time to make clear the inseparable and reciprocal dependence of subject and object, together with the antithesis between them which cannot be eliminated. This knowledge leads us to seek the inner nature of the world, the thing-in-itself, no longer in either of those two elements of the representation, but rather in something entirely different from the representation, in something that is not encumbered with such an original, essential, and therefore insoluable antithesis (WWR I, 31).

Schopenhauer feels that the phenomenal world must be transcended in order to reach the noumenal, although the noumenal is not "experienced" like the phenomenal; it is re-joined. This view, however, does not obviate the need for him to attempt to explain human relations to the phenomenal world, as had his mentor, Kant. B. V. Kishan notes that whereas Gautama Buddha is averse to any explanation of the nature of reality, leaving its interpretation vague, Schopenhauer is quite clear about his explanation and accordingly develops an entire system around it. "Schopenhauer may be said to diverge from the maxim of the Buddha that it is futile to raise questions concerning things which cannot be grasped through reasoning and intellect" (Fox 256). Such a divergence from Buddhist teachings, however, seems to be necessitated by Schopenhauer's need to establish his position in relation Kant and other post-Kantian thinkers. This despite his antagonism toward them, for ultimately he takes "the world as representation" as almost a given and devotes most of his work to discussions of the thing-in-itself, the will, aesthetic experience, the roles of the genius and mystic, and transcendence of the material.

Schopenhauer believed that the two key ideas in Kantian thought are (1) that human beings experience the world as representations of the data of the senses and (2) behind this world or its representations is the thing-in-itself, which Kant felt one can never know. Similarly, in his other two primary sources – Plato's dialogues and the Upanishads – "representation" is construed as only a relative reality, which would

later in the history of Hinduism be called *mâyâ* or "illusion," something that is not eternal reality. In the "Allegory of the Cave," Socrates describes human beings' sensual relation to the world using the metaphor of only being able to see one's own shadow, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave in which one is imprisoned (Jowett I, 774).[11] Schopenhauer will not only also construe representation as *mâyâ* in his text, but claims that his philosophy can provide the necessary basis for deducing all the leading assertions of the Upanishads. He admonishes in the preface to the first volume of The World as Will and Representation that while a thorough knowledge of Plato and Kant is assumed, if his reader

> gar noch der Wohltat der *Veden* teilhaft geworden, deren uns durch die Upanischaden eröffneter Zugang in meinen Augen der größte Vorzug ist, den dieses noch junge Jahrhundert vor den früheren aufzuweisen hat, indem ich vermute, daß der Einfluß der Sanskrit-Literatur nicht weniger tief eingreifen wird als im 15. Jahrhundert die Wiederbelebung der griechischen: hat also, sage ich, der Leser auch schon die Weihe uralter indischer Weisheit empfangen und empfänglich aufgenommen; dass ist er auf das allerbeste bereitet zu hören, was ich ihm vorgetragen habe (SW I, 11).[lxxxii]

[lxxxii] Has shared in the benefit of the *Vedas*, access to which, opened to us by the *Upanishads*, is in my view the greatest advantage which this still young century has to show over previous centuries, since I surmise that the influence of Sanskrit literature will penetrate no less deeply than did the revival of Greek literature in the fifteenth century; if, I say, the reader has also already received and assimilated the

At this time, Schopenhauer was also familiar with other Sanskrit texts as well as a few texts on Buddhism. His knowledge of Buddhist texts is less evident in the first volume of The World as Will and Representation (1818) than in volume two (1844). An explanation for this may lie in the fact that the number of translated Buddhist texts in the West increased with the discovery of the Pali canon and the proliferation of commentaries such as Eugène Burnouf's Introduction à l'histoire du Buddhism Indien [Introduction to the History of Indian Buddhism] (also 1844). Only three of the works listed in Schopenhauer's posthumous library that specifically refer to Buddhist thought have publication dates earlier than 1818: M. Ozeray's Recherches sur Bouddhou [Researches on Buddha] (1817), Abel Rémusat's Le livre des récompenses et des peines [The Book of Rewards and Penalties], and Samuel Turner's Gesantschafsreise an den Hof des Teshoo Lama [Legation Voyage to the Court of the Teshoo Lama] (1801) [translated from the English].[12] Schopenhauer has no particular predilection for any school of Buddhism, preferring to rely on its insights as they are presented in excerpted form in the works of other writers. His comments do, however, as Kishan points out, indicate knowledge of the different phases in the development of the various schools of Buddhism.[13] Further European translation of Hindu sources would also have an impact on the second edition of

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divine inspiration of ancient Indian wisdom, then he is best of all prepared to hear what I have to say to him (WWR I, xv).

volumes one and two of The World as Will and Representation, particularly A. W. Schlegel's 1823 translation of the Bhagavad-Gita.

If one heeds Schopenhauer's warning not to read his masterwork without acquaintance with Vedic literature, and avoids the tendency among some critics to place him only within the context of Western philosophy as Schelling and Hegel's enemy and as a precursor to Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, the extent to which Hindu and Buddhist ideas influence his work is abundantly apparent. It would not be inaccurate to divide Schopenhauer's philosophy into three main parts roughly conforming to the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism, as has been done by critics such as John E. Atwell. These would consist of (1) the observation that material existence is primarily composed of suffering, (2) the "diagnosis" that suffering is a manifestation of the "will to live," and (3) the "cure" that by ceasing to will, suffering abates and, in extreme cases, totally disappears.[14] In volume one, Schopenhauer provides the reader with an account of the miseries of material existence, the suggestion of an escape from this world of suffering, and a kind of metaphysics in which the existence of suffering will be rendered intelligible and possibly justified – this idea parallels the nearly contemporaneous Emersonian theodicy.[15] As in the Hindu and Buddhist idea of *karma*, for Schopenhauer, one is responsible for the suffering that one experiences and therefore deserves it. The concept that one's status in this life is determined by one's actions in prior lives is, of course, a basis of the

Indian caste system. The debate, however, between the idea that one can achieve immediate enlightenment and the notion that such an event can occur only after lifetimes of working up the karmic ladder has been a point of debate between competing schools of Hinduism and Buddhism for centuries.

Unlike Early Romantics such as Novalis or Friedrich Schlegel, there is no attempt on Schopenhauer's part to conflate the teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism with the Judeo-Christian tradition or, as in the works of other figures previously mentioned, with Greco-Roman mythology. Schopenhauer, however, like the Indo-Germans before him, appears to locate the origins of the Old Testament in the Zend-Avesta and those of the New Testament in Indian religion. "Das Neue Testament hingegen muß irgendwie indischer Abstammung sein: davon zeugt seine durchaus indische, die Moral in die Askese überführende Ethik, sein Pessimismus und sein Avatar" (SW V, 449),[lxxxiii] he observes in "Über Religion" [On Religion] in Parerga, and a bit further on asserts that "Alles, was im Christentum Wahres ist, findet sich auch im Brahmanismus und Buddhaismus" (ibid. 450).[lxxxiv] Yet, Schopenhauer does not feel that the Judeo-Christian tradition is as useful as the Near- and Far Eastern

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[lxxxiii] The New Testament must [somehow] be of Indian origin: witness of that is its altogether Indian ethic, in which morality leads to asceticism, its pessimism and its avatar (Hollingdale 190).

[lxxxiv] Everything true in Christianity is also to be discovered in Brahmanism and Buddhism (ibid. 191). Schopenhauer uses the term "findet" ("found"), that is, Schopenhauer implies that such truths are also to be found there, not necessarily that they originated there.

texts from which he feels it is derived, for he finds it less applicable to practical human situations.

Post-Kantians may have attempted to tease out issues of practicality from states of existence purported to be beyond human ken. For Schopenhauer, post-Kantianism was doomed from the start, because even Schelling, who had been profoundly affected by the Gitagovinda and other Sanskrit texts, denies the importance of what for Schopenhauer is the second key doctrine that Kant expounds in The Critique of Pure Reason: the thing-in-itself. Kant argues that knowledge of the thing-in-itself is impossible because it transcends all our cognitive functions based on time, space, and causality. The first two of the four books of The World as Will and Representation, "Die Vorstellung, unterworfen dem Satze vom Grunde: Das Objekt der Erfahrung und Wissenschaft" [The Representation subject to the Principle of Sufficient Reason: The Object of Experience and of Science] and "Die Objektivation des Willens" [The Objectification of the Will], concern the thing-in-itself and will. The equation of the thing-in-itself with will as the fundamental reality forms the basis of Schopenhauer's metaphysics of nature, and thus of his whole system. The "Absolute" to be found in forms of idealism such as Hegel's are denied by Schopenhauer out of hand, in favor of a fundamental reality with which one hopes to reintegrate one's individual soul.

While Book I concerns material contained in Schopenhauer's doctoral thesis – the fact that perceptible objects are only representations formed according to spatial, temporal, and causal properties; Book II attempts to understand the reality within such properties. Schopenhauer argues that neither realist philosophy nor empirical science can help us experience the reality behind representation, because object and representation are indistinguishably one. Phenomena, in other words, have an inner, insensible reality: the thing-in-itself, independent of the principle of sufficient reason, which, unlike Kant, he argues one can immediately know through the experience of one's own body. What is confusing about Schopenhauer's conception of the will, it seems even to him, is that he appears to mean both the fundamental reality and the human volition that one tries to overcome. Schopenhauer's conception of the will is thus not unlike that of the unity of *atman* and *Brahman* to be found in the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita. Will, for Schopenhauer, is both *atman* and *Brahman*, both the individual embodied soul and the impersonal universal soul. Will moves through us and around us, motivates our actions in a blind, instinctual way and yet helps us act intentionally to overcome our embodiment. While Kishan incorrectly asserts that Schopenhauer "believes" in the "concreteness" of the world (despite Schopenhauer's assertion that the world of the senses is phenomenal), he is correct in stating that Schopenhauer does not make the material, representational world mind-dependent, but will-dependent. Schopenhauer asserts that the human mind constructs the world

of appearances, but only the representation of that world is dependent on the subject. The world as fundmental reality is dependent on the will.

For Schopenhauer, as for the "spiritual athlete" (*yogin*) of the Bhagavad-Gita, human beings are not merely intellectual, but creatures who experience the world of representations through their bodies. The body therefore is the gateway through which we encounter the fundamental aspect of the representative world. One is aware of one's body as both an object, a representation of the willing, thinking subject, and as a subject that itself acts. The conclusion may be drawn from recognition of the double manner of bodily experience. Will is also the underlying nature of the perceptual objects that otherwise are mere representations of the thinking subject: "Jeder wahre, echte, unmittelbare Akt des Willens ist sofort und unmittelbar auch erscheinender Akt des Leibes; und diesem entsprechend ist andererseits jede Einwirkung auf den Leib sofort und unmittelbar auch Einwirkung auf den Willen" (SW I, 158).[lxxxv] In the Bhagavad-Gita, *yoga* – or "integration" (from the Sanskrit verb *yukta*, "to yoke") – is spoken of as the reunion of *atman*, the individual soul, with *Brahman*, the universal soul. Schopenhauer's emphasis on the body is not unlike *hatha*, the branch of *yoga* that involves physical postures meant to free ones mind from embodiment.[16] In Book II, Schopenhauer states that every act of the will

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[lxxxv] Every true, genuine, immediate act of the will is also at once and directly a manifest act of the body; and correspondingly, on the other hand, every impression on the body is also at once and directly an impression on the will (WWR, I, 101).

is also inevitably a movement of the body, thus overcoming the will may begin with overcoming the body, by attempting to enter states that transcend embodiment. In understanding one's material embodiment as the expression of one's will, one is thereby grasping what one really is as a thing-in-itself, as a "will" that is not a member of the causal order even though it is capable of initiating its own string of causal connections.[17] Schopenhauer thus postulates that the nature of things-in-themselves has a structure analogous to that of "will."

Scholarship on Schopenhauer, however, has tended to conflate these two wills, as Schopenhauer himself largely does: the one that governs our material actions and the one that strives to free us from materiality.

> Wann aber äußerer Anlaß oder innere Stimmung uns plötzlich aus dem endlosen Strome des Wollens heraushebt, die Erkenntnis dem Sklavendienste des Willens entreißt, die Aufmerksamkeit nun nicht mehr auf die Motive des Wollens gerichtet wird, sondern die Dinge frei von ihrer Beziehung auf den Willen auffaßt, also ohne Interesse, ohne Subjektivität, rein objektiv sie betrachtet, ihnen ganz hingegeben, sofern sie bloß Vorstellungen, nicht sofern sie Motive sind: dann ist die auf jenem ersten Wege des Wollens immer gesuchte, aber immer entfliehende Ruhe mit enim Male von selbst eingetreten, und uns ist völlig wohl. Es ist der schmerzenslose Zustand, den Epikuros als das höchste Gut und als den Zustand der Götter pries: denn wir sind für jenen

> Augenblick des schnöden Willensdranges entledigt, wir feiern den Sabbath der Zuchthausarbeit des Wollens, das Rad des Ixion steht still (SW I, 280).[lxxxvi]

Nevertheless, different types of things manifest the will to different extents. Like Schelling, Schopenhauer accounts for these differences by invoking Plato's Ideas.[18] Plato first presents the concept that the observable world is an imperfect image of a realm of unobservable and unchanging "forms" in the Φαιδων [Phaedo] (c.325 BC), and adds that the best life is one centered on the love of these divine objects. The Forms are the universal prototypes for the various kinds of objects in the phenomenal world. In quotidian experience we rarely notice the "Idea" behind the object, concerning ourselves instead with their pragmatic relationships to us. Taking, therefore, a lead from Plato, like some other post-Kantians and the Jena Romantics, Schopenhauer in effect argues that Kantianism had to culminate in a kind of Spinozism to establish a tenable relationship between nature and human freedom.

[lxxxvi] When, however, an external cause or inward disposition suddenly raises us out of the endless stream of willing, and snatches knowledge from the thralldom of the will, the attention is now no longer directed to the motives of willing, but comprehends things free from their relation to the will. Thus it considers things without interest, without subjectivity, purely objectively; it is entirely given up to them in so far as they are merely representations, and not motives. Thus all at once the peace, always sought but always escaping us on that first path of willing, comes to us of its own accord, and all is well with us. It is the painless state, prized by Epicurus as the highest good and as the state of the gods; for that moment we are delivered from the miserable pressure of the will. We celebrate the Sabbath of the penal servitude of willing; the wheel of Ixion stands still (WWR I, 196).

While Schopenhauer did not revise his initial system to the extent that Schelling or Fichte revised theirs, his conception, or at least description, of the thing-in-itself changes over the course of the next four decades. Moira Nicholls concentrates on three shifts in what Schopenhauer says about facets of the thing-in-itself: (1) its "knowability," (2) its nature, and (3) his explicit attempt to assimilate his own doctrines about the thing-in-itself with Eastern doctrines (Janaway 171). She argues that where in the first volume Schopenhauer is emphatic that the thing-in-itself is exclusively will or will-to-live, in his later writings there are passages which suggest that the thing-in-itself is will in only one of its aspects, and that it has other aspects that are the focus of mystical awareness. It is "plausible to suggest that the passages in the later works, in which Schopenhauer apparently withdraws his claim of direct acquaintance with the thing-in-itself as will, indicate a shift in his thinking" (ibid. 172-173).

While Novalis and Friedrich Schlegel take Shaivic stances, and Schelling a Vaishnavic position, Schopenhauer concentrates on the Brahmanic, the creative. He emphasizes the sin inherent in creating the world, as in the myth of Prometheus. In "Fragmente zur Geschichte der Philosophie" [Fragments for the History of Philosophy] in Parerga and Paralipomena, Schopenhauer argues that redemption is a concept of Indian origin, for it "eben auch die indische Lehre voraussetzt, nach welcher der Ursprung der Welt (dieses Samsara der Buddaisten) selbst schon vom

Übel, nämlich eine sündliche Tat des Brahma ist" (SW IV, 81).[lxxxvii] Schopenhauer, however, acknowledges that his characterization of Brahma as evil is an interpretation of Indian mythology rather than an actual statement of accepted Hindu doctrine.[19] This remark is in contrast to Friedrich Schlegel, who argues in On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians that with the Hindu doctrine of Emanation the world is mistakenly viewed as degraded and thus only the realm of the Creator is a place of divine bliss. This kind of (Christian) Creator does not exist for Schopenhauer, however. Creation is for him more akin to that found in later Hinduism, a non-anthropomorphic occurrence. One might note, however, that the concept of creation as a sin exists in early, Vedic Hinduism. The "Raudra Brahmana" section of the Mahabharata tells of the descent from transcendental time into temporality due to the Father at the beginning of cyclic existence, who created the world out of a passion that should have been controlled.[20] Hinduism conceives of time in eons that run their course and are consumed by Agni, the fire who is the only witness to the dissolution of the cosmos. Kramrisch explains man's place in this scheme:

> In the context of Shiva's myth, man has not yet been created in the flesh. To bring about man in his physical concrete existence as human being will be the task assigned to Rudra-Shiva by his father, the Lord of Generation,

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[lxxxvii] Presupposes the Indian teaching according to which the origin of the world (this Samsara of the Buddhists) is itself based on evil; that is to say, it is a sinful act of Brahma (PP I, 62).

> who is known in the *Puranas* as Brahma, the Creator. He will create the eon where the noumenal universe that is Rudra's body will come to life in all its parts, and its ingredients will combine in sentient creatures born to live and to die. The Father who shed the seed, [called] Prajapati [in the last eon], and [called] Brahma [in this one], successively in the ongoing narrative of sacred tradition, plays the role of the Creator (ibid. 111-12).

Book III of The World as Will and Representation is "Die Vorstellung, unabhängig vom Satze des Grundes: Die Platonische Idee: Das Objekt der Kunst" [The Representation independent of the Principle of Sufficient Reason: The Platonic Idea: The Object of Art]. Here Schopenhauer describes only two realms of experience in which one is aided in abandoning the self, the first of which is aesthetic experience, particularly the experience of the sublime. Schopenhauer explains that the value of literature, and of tragedy, in particular, lies in its quieting of the will.

> … teils geht er aus der Menschheit selbst hervor durch die sich kreuzenden Willensbestrebungen der Individuen, durch die Bosheit und Verkehrtheit der meisten. […] … hier mehr, dort minder zur Besinnung gebracht und gemildert durch das Licht der Erkenntnis, bis endlich in einzelnen diese Erkenntnis, geläutert und gesteigert durch das Leiden selbst… […] …wodurch nunmehr die vorhin so gewaltigen *Motive* ihre Macht verlieren und statt ihrer die wollkommene Erkenntnis des Wesens der Welt, als *Quietiv*

> des Willens wirkend, die Resignation herbeiführt, das Aufgeben nicht bloß des Lebens, sondern des ganzen Willens zum Leben selbst (SW I, 353-54).[lxxxviii]

He uses the same distinction that Kant makes in his third critique, The Critique of Judgment, between the "mathematical sublime" and the "dynamic sublime." The mathematical sublime entails objects of such immeasurable size, whether microscopic or macrocosmic, that they cease to have materiality that the human mind can experience. The dynamic sublime, which is closer to that of Burke and the sublime of both the English and German Romantics, is what one would call objects that show us our physical inadequacy, but which we can still comprehend, such as hurricanes. For Kant, the dynamic sublime gives the human mind a chance to experience our humility and understand one's calling as a moral being; whereas, for Schopenhauer, the experience of the dynamic sublime is one of the only ways in which people can acquire a sense of what transcendence would be like. It is a vehicle for escaping materiality. Schopenhauer distinguishes this notion of the sublime from the experience of beauty:

[lxxxviii] In part it proceeds from mankind itself through the self-mortifying efforts of will on the part of individuals, through the wickedness and perversity of most. […] Here and there it reaches thoughtfulness and is softened more or less by the light of knowledge, until at last in the individual case this knowledge is purified and enhanced by suffering itself. […] The *motives* that were previously so powerful now lose their force, and instead of them, the complete knowledge of the real nature of the world, acting as a *quieter* of the will, produces resignation, the giving up not merely of life, but of the whole will-to-live itself (WWR I, 253).

> Was also das Gefühl des Erhabenen von dem des Schönen unterscheidet, ist dieses: beim Schönen hat das reine Erkennen ohne Kampf die Oberhand gewonnen, indem die Schönheit des Objekts, d. h. dessen die Erkenntnis seiner Idee erleichternde Beschaffenheit, den Willen und die seinem Dienste frönende Erkenntnis der Relationen ohne Widerstand und daher unmerklich aus dem Bewußtsein entfernte und dasselbe als reines Subjekt des Erkennens übrigließ, so daß selbst keine Erinnerung an den Willen nachbleibt: hingegen bei dem Erhabenen ist jener Zustand des reinen Erkennens allererst gewonnen durch ein bewußtes und gewaltsames Losreißen von den als ungünstig erkannten Beziehungen desselben Objekts zum Willen, durch ein freies von Bewußtsein begleitetes Erheben über den Willen und die auf ihn sich beziehende Erkenntnis (SW I, 288).[lxxxix]

Pure knowledge can be achieved whether the object is beautiful or sublime, but it is a much more violent process in the latter case, in which the individual will must,

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[lxxxix] What distinguishes the feeling of the sublime from that of the beautiful is that, with the beautiful, pure knowledge has gained the upper hand without a struggle, since the beauty of the object, in other words, that quality of it which facilitates knowledge of its Idea, has removed from consciousness, without resistance and hence imperceptibly, the will and knowledge of relations that slavishly serve this will. What is then left is pure subject of knowing, and not even a recollection of the will remains. On the other hand, with the sublime, that state of pure knowing is obtained first of all by a conscious and violent tearing away from the relations of the same object to the will, which are recognized as unfavourable, by a free exhaltation, accompanied by consciousness, beyond the will and the knowledge related to it (WWR I, 202).

paradoxically, be employed to tear the impersonal will away from the object. Schopenhauer concludes this section on the plastic arts by noting that ultimately the experience of art results in resignation, in the abolition of the will, which he writes is the innermost spirit of Christianity and of Hinduism and Buddhism. "Nunmehr endigt mit der Darstellung seiner freien Selbstafhebung durch das eine große Quietiv, welches ihm aufgeht aus der vollkommensten Erkenntnis seines eigenen Wesens" (ibid. 328),[xc] which has attached to it the following astonishing but typical footnote: "Diese Stelle setzt zu ihrm Verständnis das folgende Buch ganz und gar voraus" (ibid.).[xci]

For Schopenhauer the art form that most successfully approached transcendence was music. Romanticism had emphasized music's "subjective inwardness" as exemplary of autonomous, human freedom. For Schopenhauer, however, music was more than that; it was the sound of fundamental reality:

> Die Musik ist nämlich eine so unmittelbare Objektivation und [ein] Abbild des ganzen Willens, wie die Welt selbst es ist, ja wie die Ideen es sind, deren vervielfältigte Erscheinung die Welt der einzelnen Dinge ausmacht. Die Musik ist also keineswegs gleich den andern Künsten das Abbild der Ideen;

[xc] Art ends by presenting the free self-abolition of the will through the one great quieter that dawns on it from the most perfect knowledge of its own nature (ibid. 233)

[xci] This passage presupposes for its comprehension the whole of the following book (ibid.).

> sondern Abbild des Willens selbst, dessen Objektivität auch die Ideen sind: deshalb eben ist die Wirkung der Musik so sehr viel mächtiger und eindringlicher als die der andern Künste: denn diese reden nur vom Schatten, sie aber vom Wesen (ibid. 359).[xcii]

This is not dissimilar from the reverence with which the sacred syllable "OM" is held in Hinduism. Appearing throughout its literature, OM is not considered a word, but a symbol and syllable that is a manifestation of spiritual power and betokens the presence of the absolute within both *atman* and *Brahman*.[21]

Alongside the Romantic elevation of music in German society generally at this time was the elevation of Kant's notion of the "genius." For Schopenhauer, the exemplar of genius is the composer, in particular Beethoven, who reveals the fundmental reality beyond even his own comprehension. In the work of art, however, despite his genius, the artist can only escape the suffering of life fleetingly:

> [Er] ist ja selbst der Wille, der sich also objektiviert und in stetem Leiden bleibt. Jene reine wahre und tiefe Erkenntnis des Wesens der Welt wird ihm nun Zweck an sich: er bleibt bei ihr stehn. Daher wird sie ihm nicht, wie wir

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[xcii] Thus music is as *immediate* an objectification and copy of the whole *will* as the world itself is, indeed as the Ideas are, the multiplied phenomenon of which constitutes the world of individual things. Therefore, music is by no means like the other arts, namely a copy of the Ideas, but is a *copy of the will itself*, the objectivity of which are the Ideas. For this reason the effect of music is so very much more powerful and penetrating than is that of the other arts, for these others speak only of the shadow, but music of the essence (ibid. 257).

> es im folgneden Buche bei dem zur Resignation gelangten Heiligen sehn werden, Quietiv des Willens, erlöst ihn nicht auf immer, sondern nur auf Augenblicke vom Leben und ist ihm so noch nicht der Weg aus demselben, sondern nur einstweilen ein Trost in demselben (ibid. 372).[xciii]

The fourth and final book of The World as Will and Representation, “Bei erreichter Selbsterkenntnis, Bejahung und Verneinung des Willens zum Leben” [With Attainment of Self-Knowledge, Affirmation and Denial of the Will-to-Live], concerns the “geniuses” of morality: the saint and the ascetic. The moral saint identifies with the suffering of others by breaking through the world of representation, in which we appear to be separate beings in often antagonistic relationships. This breaking through occurs without practical, intellectual understanding. The same is true of the ascetic; however, in this case the will has been denied completely, to the point at which one becomes indifferent to suffering, both one’s own and others’. For the ascetic all the various distinctions of the represented world disappear. Schopenhauer recognizes, though, that such a state cannot be characterized by any kind of intelligible metaphysics.

[xciii] He himself is the will objectifying itself and remaining in constant suffering. That pure, true, and profound knowledge of the inner nature of the world now becomes for him an end in itself; at it he stops. Therefore it does not become for him a quieter of the will, as we shall see in the following book in the case of the saint who has attained resignation; it does not deliver him from life forever, but only for a few moments. For him it is not the way out of life, but only an occasional consolation in it (WWR I, 267).

Such figures for Schopenhauer demonstrate that it is possible for the individual to rise above the knowledge that arises through the principle of sufficient reason and the delusion of the *principium individuationis*, that is, that one can delight in a life of peace and joy in the phenomenal world. The qualities of intellect, reason and the capacity to detach oneself from the distractions of the world are the special gifts which are possessed by the human being and which are not available to any other known creature in nature; they endow the individual with the rare power of escaping the very will that has created him.[22] The human mind or "personality" is both that which helps one reach final union with *Brahman*, the underlying spirit of creation, and that which one must overcome. The "Mundaka Upanishad" states, "He [what Christians might call the "Holy Spirit"] cannot be seen by the eye, and words cannot reveal him. He cannot be reached by the senses, or by austerity or sacred actions. By the grace of wisdom and purity of mind, he can be seen indivisible in the silence of contemplation" (Mascaró 80). Gautama Buddha is supposed to have stated in the Vajrachchedika Prajnaparamita-sutra [Sutra of the Diamond-Cutter of Supreme Wisdom] (100 BC-AD 600), for example, that the individual has to make his life the medium for scaling greater heights of moral perfection. For Schopenhauer, this involves the innate quality of denying the very substratum of which human life is but an expression. He prefers the New Testament of the Bible perhaps because it presents an exemplary, benevolent figure for the human being to emulate. One

cannot become Christ, however, according to the Bible; but one can become a Buddha, at least according to Gautama Buddha. It is no wonder that ultimately Schopenhauer's philosophy bears more resemblance to Buddhism than to Hinduism, for the Buddhist moral order appears more likely to engender hope and compassion than can an omnipotent will that is not an exemplar for human action.

Notions of*nirvana* fascinated Schopenhauer; however, he took issue with the Buddhist view that a moral universe would create a world that is unlike itself and with the idea of absorption into a reality of harmonious balance. Some clarification of the ideas around the term *nirvana* is necessary here. In Sanskrit *nirvana* means "extinction." In Hinduism, however, it connotes a state of liberation, characterized by the merging of *atman* and *Brahman*, which frees one from suffering, the cyclic tedium of death and rebirth, and all other bonds of material incarnation. In Mahayana Buddhism (that of Northern Asia), though the meaning is largely the same, the notion of *nirvana* undergoes an historical change that may be attributed to the introduction of the *bodhisattva* ideal and to an emphasis placed on the unified nature of the world. *Nirvana* in this context has sometimes been described in later Buddhism as the bliss that one feels in experiencing one's identity with the absolute, this leading some practioners to believe that *nirvana* is a material state that is to be surpassed, until even bliss disappears. Schuhmacher and Woerner describe the Western confusion about *nirvana*:

> In the West *nirvana* has often been misunderstood as mere annhiliation; even in early Buddhism it was not so conceived. In many texts, to explain what is described as nirvana, the simile of extinguishing a flame is used. The fire that [appears to go] out does not pass away [because its energy changes state] but merely becomes invisible by passing into space; thus the term *nirvana* does not indicate annhilation but rather [sic] entry into another mode of existence. The fire comes forth from space and returns back [sic] into it; thus *nirvana* is a spiritual event that takes place in time but is also, in an unmanifest and imperishable sphere always already there. (Schuhmacher and Woerner 248-49).

As this passage illustrates, even the idea of the void as nothing is a misnomer. A void is empty of anything that a human being can perceive with the senses, but this is to define "void" in the realms of metaphysics or mysticism. (In physics the supposed "void" has been found not to be empty at all.)[23] Schuhmacher and Woerner go on to add that whether one uses terms such as "bliss" or "annhilation," words are inadequate to describe *nirvana*, and one must remember that it is not "being nothing." Gautama Buddha himself declined to the make any statement concerning *nirvana*, because, whether a positive state or annihilation, its net import for conduct in spiritual practice was still the same goal: the cessation of suffering.

By the same token, Schopenhauer finds in *dharma* (the teachings of Buddhism) the possibility of denying the will-to-live, but seems to feel the need to point out that the pursuit of "eudemonology" is a worthy and necessary goal. In Parerga and Paralipomena, he refers several times to "eudemonology" (from the Greek *eudemonia*, meaning "happiness," which appears most prominently in Aristotle's Τεχνησ Ρητορικησ [Rhetoric] I, 5). In his "Aphorisms on the Wisdom of Life," Schopenhauer describes eudemonology as the art of getting through life as pleasantly and successfully as possible. While he admits that his philosophy argues that an existence in which one is attached to and satisfied by materiality is impossible, he appears late in his life to be preoccupied by the problem of happiness. He is torn by such a preoccupation and laments that "um eine solche dennoch ausarbeiten zu können, habe ich daher gänzlich abgehn müssen von dem höheren metaphysisch-ethischen Standpunkte, zu welchem meine eigentliche Philosophie hinleitet" (SW IV, 375).[xciv] His discussion of living a happy life, therefore, rests on a compromise and the term "eudemonology" is to be read as a euphemism, for he can entertain only the possibility of a conditional happiness.

This preoccupation with happiness, though cursorily treated in his oeuvre, appears to fly in the face of the fact that Schopenhauer's philosophy is known as

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[xciv] To be able to work out such an answer, I have therefore had to abandon entirely the higher metaphysical ethical standpoint to which [my] real philosophy leads (PP I, 313).

"Pessimism." Many of the Indo-Germans have agreed on a variety of issues with Voltaire, a true "Indo-maniac," as noted above. Voltaire's criticism of Leibniz's notion that this is the best of all possible worlds, as expressed in Candide (1759), may be called pessimism for its emphasis on the cruelty of the material world. Similarly, the philosophy of Schopenhauer may be called pessimism in its renunciation of materialism (if one finds materialism personally edifying). Schopenhauer's noting that the world of representation is one of suffering is, however, like Buddhism, merely the launching point for a philosophy that attempts to look beyond material incarnation and toward what the Jena Romantics would have called "salvation." According to Gautama Buddha the notion of the self has to be given up by the individual if he wants to break the cycle of rebirth into suffering. For Schopenhauer, as well, the individual must overcome dependence on knowledge that is attained through the principle of sufficient reason before he can hope to understand the will. To manage this, Schopenhauer does not advocate the path of asceticism, which renounces teleology completely; he does, however, admonish against over-attachment to the self, which is posited merely because the senses meet objects and give rise to physical sensations.

While Kant found that understanding the nature of the world as things-in-themselves inspired him to live a moral life, Schopenhauer's understanding of the world as will merely highlights the futility of most human actions. "Freedom, the

watchword of all Kantian and post-Kantian philosophy, was, for Schopenhauer, the freedom to rid ourselves of the illusions of freedom in the first place, which is possible only for the most cultured and rarefied of people" (Pinkard 343). The only form of freedom that remained for Schopenhauer was the freedom to overcome will. Schopenhauer thus found post-Kantianism's hopes for a world of rational freedom naïve, arguing that one must abandon traditional goals. For him the abandonment of the self does not signal detachment from others, however, for in abandonment he felt that distinctions between self and others would vanish as one comes to closer to integration with the will. Therefore, loss of self fosters not nihilism, for Schopenhauer, but sympathy:

> wir sehn nun, daß einem solchen Gerechten schon nicht mehr wie dem Bösen das principium individuationis eine absolute Scheidewand ist, daß er nicht wie jener nur seine eigene Willenserscheinung bejaht und alle andern verneint, daß ihm andere nicht bloße Larven sind, deren Wesen von dem seinigen ganz verschieden ist; sondern durch seine Handlungsweise zeigt er an, daß er sein eigenes Wesen, nämlich den Willen zum Leben als Ding an sich auch in der fremden, ihm bloß als Vorstellung gegebenen Erscheinung *wiedererkennt* (SW I, 504).[xcv]

[xcv] We now see that for such a just man the *principium individuationis* is no longer an absolute partition as it is for the bad; that he does not, like the bad man, affirm merely

The recognition of the illusion of freedom leads to empathy.

So even if Bertrand Russell terms Schopenhauer's philosophy a "gospel of resignation" (Russell 757), it in fact is one of action. Kishan argues "to regard our experience of the world as transitory or phenomenal does not mean loss of faith in the efficacy of human effort" (Fox 256-57). Schopenhauer's premier English-language translator, E. F. J. Payne, echoes this thinking. "Many have complained that [Schopenhauer's] philosophy is somber and pessimistic, but an impartial examination will lead to the conclusion that it is neither more nor less pessimistic than the teachings of Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Christianity, all of which agree in preaching the supreme goal as deliverance from this earthly existence" (WWR I, viii). Schopenhauer thus appears to formulate an "anti-theodicy": a justification of good in the face of evil, without the help of a personal god. God, for Schopenhauer, is only anthropomorphically dead; Schopenhauer's divine is an impersonal universal will.

Unsurprisingly, Schopenhauer had neither love for nor faith in politics, which he felt not to be concerned with empathy to a significant degree, and found that since the vast majority of people will never achieve the kind of enlightenment that he hopes for, the state must simply maintain order and not attempt to promote ethics.

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his own phenomenon of will and deny all others; that others are not for him mere masks, whose inner nature is quite different from his. On the contrary, he shows by his way of acting that he again recognizes his own inner being, namely the will-to-live as thing-in-itself, in the phenomenon of another given to him merely as representation (WWR I, 370).

Schopenhauer's philosophy is thus the antithesis of Left-wing Hegelianism, and even of Hegel himself in so far as Hegel's philosophy is largely derived in response to historical events, as opposed to Schopenhauer who mistrusted history and had little interest in the nationalist wars of his day. Such apparent abandonment of hope for political change (although Schopenhauer himself never had any in the first place) made him ironically well-suited to the 1850s and '60s, during which Europeans seemed discouraged by the failures of past revolutions and the grim, if profitable, realities of industrialization. During this period, nature philosophies, such as that of Schelling, were deemed overly mystical, and irrelevant to such an empirical age, while philosophy generally, the secular authority for over a century, was largely replaced as the core discipline in German universities by the natural sciences, particularly with the arrival of Darwinism.

Schopenhauer's influence in Germany, France, Russia, and the United States has been both wide and long, however, though primarily in literature and music rather than in philosophy. This is likely due to his lucid writing style, to the fact that his view allows for the possibility of absolute knowledge by means of extra-intellectual experience, as well as to his implicit favoring of more artistic modes of understanding over empirical and literalistic styles of expression. In literature, Schopenhauer's influence is to be found in such diverse figures as Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), Joris-Karl Huysmans (1848-1907), Hugo von Hoffmansthal (1874-1929), and

Lev N. Tolstoy (1828-1910) – whose late religious writings in turn impressed, in an ironic genealogy, the young Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948). In general, these authors were inspired by Schopenhauer's sense of the world's absurdity, regarded either nihilistically or comically. Schopenhauer's emphasis upon the composer as genius and the world-as-suffering was also influential among composers such as Richard Wagner (1813-1883), Johannes Brahms (1833-1897), and Arnold Schönberg (1874-1951). Among philosophers, one can cite figures such as Henri Bergson (1859-1941), who tends to focus on selected aspects of Schopenhauer's philosophy, such as his theory of the non-rational will and his Kantianism. But the most influential figure to follow Schopenhauer, at least initially, was Friedrich Nietzsche.

III

Nietzsche's "*Über-bodhisattva*"

Since the outcome of the Congress of Vienna after the defeat of Napoleon was not a unified Germany, but a set of loosely confederated states, those who sought a unified Germany looked to cohesion of culture. George Mosse remarks of the middle decades of the century:

> The revolutions of 1848, which seemed at first to give Germany another chance for unity, only resulted in frustration. The search for national roots, for a national stability upon which to form a true union was intensified

> between 1848 and 1870, and was accompanied by an increasing opposition to modernity. The modern world had denied to the Germans the unity which they had possessed long ago, and many felt that the movement for unity must draw its strength from those distant times rather than from the unpromising present (Mosse 3).

Scholars such as Eugen Weber have pointed out that by the 1870s, when the unification of Germany occurred, after more than a half century of failed attempts, the touted superiority of the bourgeoisie born of the Industrial Revolution gave way to what would come to be called a *fin de siècle* mood of spiritual emptiness. Despite the fact that public education became compulsory in France and Germany during this period, in literature the theme of the modern would increasingly come to be seen as entropy of spirit, rather than triumph of human freedom. While prior to unification those who sought cultural cohesion looked to the past, now the search seemed to cease altogether for many intellectuals, not just in Germany. Those for whom the search continued criticized the "nihilism" of their contemporaries, as in Dostoevsky's 1872 novel Demons, which attempted to show the destructive result of following the ideas of 1860s Russian Nihilist critics such as Chernyshevsky, Pisarev, and Dobrolyubov. While Dostoevsky, at least in 1872, looked to the Russian peasantry for authentic "national" culture, and contemporaries in France and Germany also continued to look to the common people for traces of their lost national culture, as

they had been for decades, other thinkers still looked to India for both their national origin and fate.

The affiliation of Europeans with India now persisted in the works of figures such as the theologian Ernest Renan (1823-1892) and the India scholar Max Müller, the latter of whom emphasized, at Oxford, the Aryan background of Europeans. At his inaugural lecture at the University of Strasbourg in 1872, however, Müller admonished his listeners against the excessive growth of German nationalism and over-trust in empirical science. Linguistics had begun to establish the empirical validity of the Indo-European language family, however, the development of the social sciences in Germany focused on discovering the origins of human civilization, and the beginnings of Social Darwinism fueled growing feelings of cultural supremacy. German political unification (1862-1871) had once again not brought about the national cultural awareness that many had anticipated with messianic fervor, and the mundanities of Bismarck's *Realipolitk* were disappointing, leading many German citizens to fall into the material pursuit of building their local economies.

For Friedrich Nietzsche, the problem of his age was not the lack of a culturally and politically cohesive nation so much as the lack of a replacement for what he felt to be the decline of traditional religious and metaphysical ways of thinking. While he appears to have felt that the "God-hypothesis," as well as all

metaphysical substitutes for it, was unworthy of belief in the first place, he worried that their demise left a void that reason and science could not adequately fill, thus endangering the health of civilization itself. This pervasive intellectual crisis became the primary problem of his philosophy, a crisis that he would eventually characterize as the "death of God" and the advent of "nihilism." He likewise criticizes and appears to reject the related postulations from the schools of post-Kantianism and Hegelianism of "things-in-themselves" and substantial "souls," taking both philosophies to have produced ontological fictions resulting from artificial linguistic-conceptual shorthand for unitary sets of relations. Nevertheless, and due largely to the influence of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche will never really be able to establish a philosopohy that is non-metaphysical, for his thinking will always characterize itself as a negation of metaphysics. One thus finds in Nietzsche a set of concerns that is indebted to and related to those of the Indo-Germans, but as a reversal of them.

Nietzsche did not believe in the possibility of absolute knowledge that transcended all perspectives, instead emphasizing the perspectival character of all thinking and the provisional character of all knowing. Thus for Nietzsche there is no true world of existence to which our human perceptions can fail to correspond, no comprehension to be gained of such a world, and not even any knowledge that is absolute and non-perspectival. He did hold, however, that the relations between objects do admit of a significant measure of comprehension if viewed from a

multiplicity of perspectives. Nietzsche felt that human thought needed to reorient itself, and, in lieu of this cluster of traditional ontological categories and interpretations, he conceived the world in terms of an inter-play of forces without any inherent structure or end. Nietzsche's universe ceaselessly organizes and reorganizes itself, as the fundamental disposition he called "will to power" gives rise to successive arrays of power relationships. Nietzsche's philosophy does not directly confront any of the traditional questions of Western philosophy, nor does it employ any of the usual styles or methods of argumentation. His writing is more literary than that of Kant, post-Kantianism, Hegel, or Schopenhauer. His works are rather a kind of creative play of perspectival expressions of human needs, desires, and possibilities, as groups or as individuals, liberated from concern with truth and knowledge.

Nietzsche tried to find his own replacement for "nihilism" that was not religious or metaphysical, to provide an answer, or answers, that were not based on a divinity or impersonal absolute of any kind. Though a follower of Schopenhauer early on, Nietzsche criticizes his "educator" starting in his first work, <u>Die Geburt der Tragödie oder Griechentum und Pessimismus</u> [The Birth of Tragedy] (1872), as well as in his later <u>Der Wille zur Macht</u> [The Will to Power] (1883-88), <u>Der Fall Wagner</u> [The Case of Wagner] (1888), and in <u>Götzendämmerung</u> [Twilight of the Idols] (1889).[24] Nietzsche sees himself as the optimist, affirming material embodiment in the face of Schopenhauer's inhuman transcendence. Marth C. Nussbaum warns that

the reader of The Birth of Tragedy must have already read Schopenhauer to understand his dichotomy of Apollonian and Dionysian, yet Schopenhauer warns that the reader of The World as Will and Representation must have already read the Upanishads. Prior to 1883, when Nietzsche read Das System des Vedanta [System of Vedanta] (1883) by his friend Paul Deussen (1845-1919), Schopenhauer appears to have been his only source for Hindu and Buddhist thought, and it remains unclear the extent to which Deussen's work may or may not have influenced Nietzsche's later thinking on Asian topics.[25] Nietzsche's lack of understanding of Schopenhauer's Hindu and Buddhist influences leads him to construe Schopenhauer's philosophy as denying that human beings are capable of positive action. Nietzsche is thus a sort of "post-Indo-German" for two reasons: first, he did not look to India for metaphysical, linguistic, or racial answers to German or European questions; secondly, and more importantly, he appears to categorically reject the religious and metaphysical foundations of the Indo-German story, as well as those of the great monotheistic religions. At the same time, his vindication of transcendant art may be seen as distinctly metaphysical in character and his exhortation for man to develop into something "higher" distinctly religious.

Trained as a classical philologist, Nietzsche looked to the Greeks for ideas in The Birth of Tragedy, believing that their art held the key to renewed human flourishing for a humanity bereft both of the consolations of religious faith and of

confidence in reason and science. Much under the influence of Schopenhauer at this early stage of his career (age 26), the two categories of nature that Nietzsche sets up in the work – the Apollonian and the Dionysian – are, however, "up to a point, simply Representation and Will in Greek costume."

> The reader of *The Birth of Tragedy* who has not read Schopenhauer is likely to be puzzled by Nietzsche's rapid introduction of these two fundamental "drives" or "tendencies" in human nature, and by the hasty manner in which one of these is linked with cognitive activity, but also with dreaming, with visual art, and with the awareness of general forms, the other with movement and sexuality, with intoxication, with the awareness of particularity, with the absence of a clear individuation of the self (Janaway 358).

While the introduction of the god Apollo into this study is new, its association is with Platonic, or Neo-platonic ideas, which have been present throughout (and indeed midway through the work Nietzsche begins to refer to the "Apollonian" as "aesthetic Socratism," as will be discussed below). Moreover, the image of Dionysus, who Nietzsche characterizes as romantically abandoning the self, is in keeping with characterizations of Dionysus among Roman writers, mentioned earlier, of a wild conqueror that learned transcendental philosophy from Brahmin priests.

The Birth of Tragedy is a book about the sustenance of a healthy society by literature and music (which, for the ancient Greeks, were intertwined as most

literature consisted of either lyric poetry or drama in the periods Nietzsche treats). Martha C. Nussbaum argues, however, that Schopenhauer and Nietzsche's respective positions on the role of art in life are radically different: with Schopenhauer arguing that aesthetics serve no practical need and are directed only toward resignation and denial, and Nietzsche arguing that they serve a practical, life-affirming function. In fact, their positions are not so different. For each of them, aesthetics serve to perform a positive function. For Schopenhauer, they give us a glimpse into *Brahman*, as noted earlier, and for Nietzsche, they render material existence worthwhile. In Nietzsche's preface to the work, dedicated to Richard Wagner, he states unequivocally its argument: "Der Kunst als der höchsten Aufgabe und der eigentlich metaphysischen Tätigkeit" (Nietzsche I, 18), and, in particular, the art of music.[xcvi] While Nietzsche would later condemn the eighteenth-century German Romanticism of music, his Dionysus, first presented here, is the god of non-visual art, as opposed to the god of the plastic arts, Apollo. Nietzsche holds up Apollo, reprehensibly, as the divine image of the *principium individuationis* (in Schopenhauer's use of the term), whereas Dionysus represents music, which is the thing-in-itself:

> Während unter dem mystischen Jubelruf des Dionysus der Bann der Individuation zersprengt wird und der Weg zu den Müttern des Seins, zu dem innersten Kern der Dinge offenliegt. Dieser ungeheure Gegensatz, der sich

[xcvi] Art is the highest human task, the true metaphysical activity (Golffing 17).

> zwischen der plastischen Kunst als der apollinischen und der Musik als der dionysischen Kunst klaffend auftut, ist einem einzigen der großen Denker in dem Maße offen bar geworded, daß er, selbst ohne jene Anleitung der hellenischen Göttersymbolik, der Musik einen verschiedenen Charakter und Ursprung vor allen anderen Künsten zuerkannte, weil sie nicht, wie jene alle, Abbild der Erscheinung, sondern unmittelbar Abbild des Willens selbst sei und also zu allem Physischen der Welt das Metaphysische, zu aller Erscheinung das Ding an sich darstelle (ibid. 73-4).[xcvii]

Nietzsche goes on to add that "Man könnte demnach die Welt ebensowohl verkörperte Musik, als verkörperten Willen nennen" (ibid. 75).[xcviii] At this early stage in his writing, Nietzsche uses the same metaphysical and idealist terminology as his predecessors, however, while he will abandon such vocabulary in favor of his own idiosyncratic style, which appears to reject such concerns, he continues to grapple with the relationship between art and human teleology or eschatology.

[xcvii] The mystical jubilation of Dionysus breaks the spell of individuation and opens a path to the maternal womb of being. Among the great thinkers there is only one who has fully realized the immense discrepancy between the plastic Apollonian art and the Dionysian art of music. Independently of Greek religious symbols, Schopenhauer assigned to music a totally different character and origin from all the other arts, because it does not, like all the others, represent appearance, but the will directly. It is the metaphysical complement to everything that is physical in the world: the thing-in-itself where all else is appearance (ibid. 97).

[xcviii] We might, therefore, just as well call the world embodied music as embodied will (ibid. 99).

He postulates that the Apollonian and the Dionysian are the product of formative forces "die aus der Natur selbst, *ohne Vermittlung des menschlichen Künstlers*, hervorbrechen" (ibid. 22).[xcix] He argues that in the Dionysian dithyramb, however, man is incited to strain his symbolic faculties to the utmost: he desires to tear asunder the veil of *Mâyâ* (a term he appears to borrow from Schopenhauer), to sink back into the original oneness of nature by expressing the very essence of nature symbolically.[26] Nietzsche finds, however, that the deities found in the Dionysian tragedies of Aeschylus do not make one think of asceticism, high intellect, or duty (which he presumably finds in Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and perhaps Schopenhauer), but of luxuriant, triumphant existence, which deifies the good and the bad indifferently.[27]

While the Apollonian is already problematic for Nietzsche, with its emphasis on the *principium individationis*, he finds that that which brings about its demise, the "aesthetic Socratism" he attributes in tragedy to Euripedes, is even more harmful to humanity. Socrates found tragedy unuseful because it did not convey truth. Nietzsche thus sees the demise of tragedy lying in its infusion by the practical in the purported service of truth: "Die optimistische Dialektik treibt mit der Geißel ihrere Syllogismen die *Musik* aus der Tragödie" (ibid. 68).[c] Nietzsche notes, however, that

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[xcix] Arising directly from nature without the mediation of the human artist (ibid. 24).

Socrates took up music in prison, asking himself: "'Ist das mir Nichtverständliche doch nicht auch sofort das Unverständige? Vielleicht gibt es ein Reich der Weisheit, aus dem der Logiker verbannt ist? Vielleicht ist die Kunst sogar ein notwendiges Korrelativum und Supplement der Wissenschaft?'" (ibid. 68-9).[ci] Nevertheless, Nietzsche traces the tradition of rational science with its concomitant smug optimism, obstacles to the realization of the Dionysian, back to Socrates.

In a precursor to his doctrine of "eternal recurrence of the same," Nietzsche asserts that in age after age the same phenomenon recurs of maintaining life through the blandishments of illusion:

> Diesen fesselt die sokratische Lust des Erkennens und der Wahn, durch dasselbe die ewige Wunde des Daseins heilen zu können, jenen umstrickt der vor seinen Augen wehende werfürerische Schönheitsschleier der Kunst, jene wiederum der metaphysische Trost, daß under dem Wirbel der Erscheinungen das ewige Leben unzerstörbar wieterfließt. […] Aus diesen Reizmitteln besteht alles, was wir Kultur nennen: je nach der Proportion des Mischungen haben wir eine vorzugsweise *sokratische* oder *künstlerische* oder *tragische*

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[c] Optimistic dialectics took up the whip of its syllogisms and drove music out of tragedy (ibid. 89).

[ci] 'Have I been too ready to view what was unintelligible to me as being devoid of meaning? Perhaps there is a realm of wisdom, after all, from which the logician is excluded? Perhaps art must be seen as the necessary complement of rational discourse?' (ibid. 90).

> Kultur; oder wenn man historische Exemplifikationen erlauben will: es gibt entweder eine alexandrinische oder eine hellenische oder eine buddaistische Kultur (Nietzsche I, 82).[cii]

One might thus call these three consolations of life the "scientific," the "artistic," and the "metaphysical." Nietzsche refers to the last as both "tragic" ("Dionysian") and "Buddhistic." While Nietzsche appears to reject metaphysical explanations of any kind of "fundamental reality," he does seem to fall back on metaphysical motifs in discussing how human beings can survive in the world. It almost seems as if Nietzsche is attempting to solve Schopenhauer's contradiction between the "pessimistic" system put forth in The World as Will and Representation and his longing for *eudemonia* found in Parerga and Paralipomena. Nietzsche extols the virtues of Kant and Schopenhauer, who he feels have won a victory over the overly optimistic foundations of logic, which form the underpinnings of our culture, by establishing "a conceptualized form of Dionysian wisdom." However, while he sees Schopenhauer "persisting in the search for truth," Nietzsche also finds him "devoid of

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[cii] One man is enthralled by the Socratic zest for knowledge and is persuaded that he can staunch the eternal wound of being with its help. Another is bequiled by the veil of art, which flutters, tantalizing, before his eyes. Yet another is buoyed up by the metaphysical solace that life flows on, indestructible, beneath the whirlpool of appearances. […] What we call culture is entirely composed of such beguilements. Depending on the proportions of the mixture, we have a culture that is principally Socratic, or artistic, or tragic; or, if historical exemplifications are permitted here, there is either an Alexandrian or a Hellenic or a Brahmanic [*buddhaistische*] culture (ibid. 108-09).

hope." The fact that here Nietzsche calls the "tragic," lived side of nature that one only gets glimpses of "Buddhistic," but within the same work refers to the Greek chorus being saved by art rather than by a Buddhistic denial of the will, is indicative of the (conscious or inadvertent) paradoxes to come in his discussions in later works of the "development" of mankind.

The "development" of the "Overman" is already prefigured here in his associations between Prometheus and Dionysus, arguing that the legend of Prometheus is "indigenous to the entire community of Aryan races" and attests to their prevailing talent for "profound and tragic vision." "Dieser titanische Drang, gleichsam der Atlas aller einzelnen zu werden und sie mit breitem Rücken höher und höher, weiter un weiter zu tragen, ist das Gemeinsame zwischen dem Promethetischen und dem Dionysischen" (ibid. 50).[ciii] Nietzsche argues that "Socratic man has run his course" and will be replaced by "tragic man," but that it falls on his reader's head to "lead the Dionysian procession out of India and into Greece." Here he appears to fall in line with the Hellenistic tendency to envision Dionysus as having become the ecstatic god by going to India. In a passage that sounds eerily prophetic, he states that Sophocles, through the Dionysian character of Oedipus, "sündigt nicht, will uns der tiefsinnige Dichter sagen: durch sein Handeln

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[ciii] This titanic urge to be the Atlas of all individuals, to bear them on broad shoulders ever farther and higher, is the common bond between the Promethean and the Dionysian forces (ibid. 65).

mag jades Gesetz, jede natürliche Ordnung, ja die sittliche Welt zugrunde gehen, eben durch dieses Handeln wird ein höherer magischer Kreis von Wirkungen gezogen, die eine neue Welt auf den Ruinen der umgestürzen alten gründen" (ibid. 47).[civ]

For Nietzsche, "Socratism" is bent on the extermination of myth, which tragedy uses to create the illusions that unify a culture. He states that, with the death of tragedy, due to the sundering of the irrational sources that nourished it, the Greeks gave up the belief in immortality, and thus the belief in an ideal future, as well as an ideal past. He admonishes his readers to heed the fact that the degeneration of the Greek national character is indicative of the extent to which people, myth, custom, and tragedy are inextricably bound together. The disappearance of tragedy signaled the disappearance of the myths that hold culture together. This argument, though appearing to move into the realms of national identities and folk aspects of culture, remains connected to metaphysics, for Nietzsche states at the work's end: "die Kunst nicht nur Nachahmung der Naturwirklichkeit, sondern gerade ein metaphysisches Supplement der Naturwirklichkeit ist, zu deren Überwindung neben sie gestellt" (ibid.

[civ] Tells us that a man who is truly noble is incapable of sin; though every law, every natural order, indeed the entire canon of ethics, perish by his actions, those very actions will create a circle of higher consequences able to found a new world on the ruins of the old (ibid. 60).

107).[cv] The difference between Schopenhauer and Nietzsche emerges here. Art, for Nietzsche, is not a door to the fundamental reality as it was for the Early Romantics and Schopenhauer; it rather "calls into being the entire world of phenomena" in a powerful way. At the beginning of The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche uses terms such as "thing-in-itself" in senses similar to those employed by Kant and Schopenhauer, however, by the end of the book, he has established that tragic art is about man. The idea that art may only be a representation of a reality human beings cannot comprehend, therefore, were it even true, is a moot point.

Nietzsche made the transition from philologist to philosopher over the course of the decade that followed The Birth of Tragedy, which saw the publication of books that focused and extended his critical assessment of various human tendencies and of his contemporaries. He then published Also Sprach Zarathustra: Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen [Thus Spake Zarathustra: A Book for All and None] (1883-85), which continues many of the themes found in The Birth of Tragedy. Here, in what is his most literary work, Nietzsche presents a series of parables that parody the Gospels and hagiography generally, about a prophet who proclaims the death of God and challenges mankind to face its destiny. Zarathustra proclaims the emergence of the "*Übermensch*" ["Overman"], who will overcome mere man. With the idea of the

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[cv] Art is not an imitation of nature but its metaphysical supplement, raised up beside it in order to overcome it (ibid. 142).

Overman, Nietzsche seeks to direct mankind's efforts to the emergence of a "higher humanity" capable of redeeming and justifying human existence, above all through the enrichment of cultural life, by espousing a "Dionysian value-standard" in place of all non-naturalistic modes of valuation.

Like Goethe and Hegel, who preferred Persia to India, Nietzsche, after much deliberation, chose a "protagonist" for his work who was geographically central to the world's major religions. Yet, the lesson of Zarathustra – if there is a single lesson to be gleaned from the work – also runs contrary to the teachings of the Zoroastrians (who still exist, now called Parsis). Although it is not clear that Zarathustra is supposed to truly resemble Zoroaster, it might be pointed out that Zoroaster preached the final reconciliation of darkness and light, good and evil. In Zarathustra, however, the future victory of a luminous deity is replaced with a human dawn that is close at hand, the sanctioning of "the death of God" releasing all men from the bonds of eschatology. More striking than any vague resemblance to Zoroaster, however, are the ways in which Nietzsche's Zarathustra responds to teachings that appear to issue from Gautama Buddha (and, by extension, Schopenhauer): "»Das Leben ist nur Leiden« - so sagen andre und lügen nicht: so sorgt doch, daß *ihr* aufhört! So sorgt doch, daß das Leben aufhört, welches nur Leiden ist!" (ibid. 573).[cvi] His exhortation here is similar to the Buddhist striving to exterminate suffering, however, Nietzsche

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[cvi] 'Life is only suffering,' others say, and do not lie: see to it, then that *you* cease! See to it, then, that the life that is only suffering ceases! (Kaufmann 45).

goes on to iterate an earlier line in the text and then turn it around: "Überall ertönt die Stimme derer, welche den Tod predigen: und die Erde ist voll von solchen, welchen der Tod gepredigt werden muß. Oder »das ewige Leben«: das gilt mir gleich, – wofern sie nur schnell dahinfahren!" (ibid. 574).[cvii] While he agrees with the so-called "preachers of death" that the multitudes of humanity suffer from what King Lear called the "superflux" of abundance, he peripatetically adds that "eternal life" is the same to him as death. Nothing that is supposed to come at the end of a mortal life – be it "enlightenment" as a different kind of being, Christian salvation, or simply the pain of death itself – is worth striving for or worrying about. What is important is to change this life: end suffering, end superfluity, be stronger, and be higher – here and now.

As he does with motifs from the Gospels, Nietzsche thus invokes Hindu and Buddhist ideas, through Schopenhauer, in order to transform them. His Overman seems to be an extention and metamorphosis of the *bodhisattva* ideal in Buddhism.[28] Gautama Buddha had vowed to become a *bodhisattva*, one who selflessly acts to end the suffering of all sentient beings. Zarathustra has taken a similar vow, yet the help he hopes to give human beings – not necessarily to all living creatures – marks not the end of suffering, but a deracinating kick into the next stage of their material

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[cvii] Everywhere the voice of those who preach death is heard; and the earth is full of those to whom one must preach death. Or 'eternal life' – that is the same to me, if only they pass away quickly (ibid. 46).

evolution. Most schools of Hinduism and Buddhism teach that suffering can end only when one actively transforms oneself, by working up the karmic ladder over the course of many lifetimes, into something that is different from a human being that only reacts to sensory phenomena. Zarathusra does not want to wait through seemingly endless cycles of karmic existence until one is finally ready to make the leap into that beyond, much less to wait for everyone else to do so. He wants to address the now and see results in this lifetime. He wants to help humanity by radically changing the rules and duration of the ontological game itself. He seems to want to become the best bodhisattva, by becoming an "*Über-bodhisattva*," stressing a distinctly materialist teleology, the goal of which is, but the destruction of inert, lower, culturally-conditioned man, not material transcendence. Nietzsche appears to espouse, in other words, a sort of Social Darwinist Buddhism that takes from Hinduism, Buddhism, and Schopenhauer the idea that one deserves one's suffering, but emphasizes that one must get over all of the negative ideas and emotions that come with it. Nietzsche's Overman is thus not unlike Shiva as the detroyer of ignorance, one the facets of Shiva to which Dionysus was most likened by classical writers, as noted earlier. Nietzsche fears that compulsory education has lowered cultural standards: "Einst war der Geist Gott, dann wurde er zum Menschen, und jetzt wird er gar noch Pöbel" (ibid. 569).[cviii] Zarathustra states that he "would believe only

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[cviii] Once the spirit was god, then he became man, now he even becomes rabble (ibid.

in a god who could dance." Walter Kaufmann sums up this argument by drawing useful parallels: "The dance is to Nietzsche a symbol of joy and levity, and the antithesis of gravity. He associates it with Dionysus; but the Hindus too have a dancing god, Shiva Nataraja – no less a contrast to the three great monotheistic religions'" (Kaufmann 6).

Zarathustra cannot wait for later developments; he needs to make them happen now, for Nietzsche argues that the world we know is without beginning or end and things happen repeatedly in the way they always have. In the section that first mentions "eternal recurrence," a notion that Zarathustra cannot accept and further fuels his stalwart call to action, he mocks Christianity's patience: "*Wer* ist der Hirt, dem also die Schlange in den Schlund kroch? […] – Der Hirt aber biß, wie mein Schrei ihm riet; er biß mit gutem Bisse! Weit weg spie er den Kopf der Schlange – : und sprang empor. – Nicht mehr Hirt, nicht mehr Mensch – ein Verwanderlter, ein Umleichteter, welcher *lachte*!" (ibid. 654).[cix] Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) argues at length that this doctrine of the "eternal recurrence" is the fundamental aspect of Nietzsche's philosophy (Nietzsche II, 5-8), a claim that Nietzsche himself also makes in Ecce Homo (published 1908). It may be argued that

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[cix] *Who* is the shepherd into whose throat the snake crawled thus? […] The shepherd, however, bit as my cry counseled him; he bit with a good bite. Far away he spewed the head of the snake – and he jumped up. No longer shepherd, no longer human – one changed, radiant, laughing! (ibid. 160).

this doctrine emerges out of the tradition of German scholarship that has located the Greek doctrine of metempsychosis in Hindu works, however, as stated above, Nietzsche envisions humanity as striving toward an ideal that is not transcendent of materiality, and thus seems more reminiscent of Heraclitus than of Pythagoras. Schopenhauer's search to reconcile transcendence and *eudemonia* thus becomes for Nietzsche a paradoxical pursuit of human perfection, an ethical overcoming of our humanity that is still intelligible by the human being. His theory of eternal recurrence therefore suffers from the same contradiction as Schopenhauer's conception of the Will. "Nietzsche oscillates between two essentially incompatible versions of the doctrine," states Richard Wolin:

> First, a voluntarist, 'anthropological' version compatible with the theory of the will to power, according to which, the idea of eternal recurrence expresses a new categorical imperative: live every moment so that you could will that moment over and over again eternally; and second, a more literal, 'cosmological' version, according to which the cosmic cycle of recurrence is indifferent to all human willing (Seduction of Unreason 52).

In contrast to Schopenhauer's figures of the genius, mystic, and ascetic, who achieve glimpses of the fundamental reality when they are temporarily able to transcend material incarnation, Zarathustra is more like a Byronic hero: a sublime destroyer who remains mortal. While for Schopenhauer the artist Beethoven suffers

because it is his lot to have unique insight into the thing-in-itself, for Nietzsche the artist Zarathustra appears to re-create his world, giving it new meaning: "Um die Erfinder von neuen Werten dreht sich die Welt – unsichtbar dreht sie sich" (Nietzsche 578).[cx] For Schopenhauer, meaning lies outside the realm of representation and creation is, in a sense, a sin, as remarked earlier. For Nietzsche, is it up to human beings to give meaning to the realm of representation, as Euripedes' Dionysus creates the world by acting it. Nietzsche thus creates a sort of meta-metaphysics, or, in Richard Rorty's words, "Nietzsche brought metaphysics to its destined end by inverting Plato, giving Becoming primacy over Being" (Vattimo x). One might say that Nietzsche makes Being into Becoming, ontology into physics.

Nietzsche's reflections on the reconceptualization of human beings' relation to the metaphysical world thus points in the direction of a naturalistic epistemology that replaces the conceptions of truth and knowledge of his predecessors (and hopefully fills the nihilistic void seemingly left by their bankruptcy) with a mode of acting in the world that makes *noumena* a moot concept. For Nietzsche, "our comprehension may be restricted to what life and the world show themselves to be and involve in our experience; but if they are the only kind of reality, there is no longer any reason to divorce the notions of truth, knowledge, and value from them" (Audi 535). It should be noted, however, that the first occasions on which Nietzsche

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[cx] Around the inventors of new values the world revolves: invisibly it revolves (ibid. 52).

uses the term "will-to-power" refer clearly to self-overcoming: "Und dies Geheimnis redete das Leben selber zu mir: »Siehe«, sprach es, »ich bin das, *was sich immer selber überwinden muß*«" (ibid. 623).[cxi] As he feels that the only tenable alternative to nihilism must be based upon a recognition and affirmation of the world's fundamental character, he posits a general standard of value in which the will-to-power, as the creative transformation of existence, is raised to its highest possible intensity and qualitative expression. Thus art, for Nietzsche, is fundamentally creative (rather than cognitive), affords a glimpse of a kind of life that would be lived more fully in this manner, and thus constitutes a step toward emergence. In this way, Nietzsche's mature thought expands upon the idea of the basic connection between art and the justification of life that was his general theme in The Birth of Tragedy. Nietzsche's philosophy may therefore be viewed as a blueprint for surviving the impatient twentieth century, in which the pace of "Socratic" change will accelerate beyond the abilities of human adaptation.

Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche each put forth philosophies that embrace the negation of accepted value systems in distinctly different ways. In Hegel, this manifests itself in the idea that a demonic destroyer can help lead society to a new and higher synthesis of ideas. Schopenhauer presents a kind of anti-theodicy – in which good is the necessary counterpart to evil, both as an explanation of will and as

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[cxi] And life itself confided this secret to me: 'Behold,' it said, 'I am that which must always overcome itself' (ibid. 115).

a spur to ethical human action. In the case of Nietzsche, the first "post-Indo-German," one wonders what he would have thought or written if he had employed the time and effort that Schopenhauer had to an acquaintance with Sanskrit literature. While it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which Nietzsche may or may not have understood Schopenhauer's relationship to his Asian sources, Nietzsche's relationship to the Indo-German legacy is just as problematic as his place in the history of post-Enlightenment philosophy. For Nietzsche, the demonic destroyer leads us beyond the thesis by destroying it completely to make way for something wholly new – a new stage of development. Nietzsche argues in The Birth of Tragedy that Plato developed an art form deeply akin to the existing forms that he had repudiated at Socrates' behest.[29] Similarly Nietzsche, in a sense, develops a philosophy akin to those he repudiates – it can only define itself as a negation of metaphysics that ultimately involves man witnessing his own transcendence. Both he and Plato break through laws of stylistic unity, but more important, Nietzsche is unable to abandon the presence of metaphysics (if you'll pardon the phrasing) though attempting to delineate a non-metaphysical set of ideas.

Conclusion

NATIONALIST REQUITAL

The influence of Nietzsche on successors, such as Oswald Spengler, and the misappropriation of Nietzsche's thought is well documented, both as *Zeitgeist* and a precursor of things to come.[1] "The late nineteenth-century development of a 'post-liberal mood' has long been recognized as a cultural and political watershed," argues Steven E. Aschheim.

> Historians have variously labeled this "change in the public spirit of Europe" [footnotes Mosse] as the revolt against positivism and materialism, as a generational rebellion against the liberal bourgeoisie, as the era of the discovery of the unconscious, and as the age of irrationalism and neo-Romanticism. Underlying and often accompanying these tendencies was the emergence of a full-blown modernism. This self-conscious, though painful, rupture with the past; its fundamental questioning of established limits, authority, and tradition; and its insistence on self-creation and the subjective dimension of meaning was similarly informed by obvious Nietzschean characteristics (Aschheim 12).

The first three decades of the twentieth century see the transformation of Nietzsche in Germany into the ultimate *volkische* hero particularly in works such as <u>Nietzsche und die Romantik</u> [Nietzsche and Romanticism] (1905) by Karl Joël (1864-1934). This work was published by Eugen Diederichs (1867-1930), the influential publisher who

coined the term "New Romanticism" to describe the "Dionysian" gatherings of activists who celebrated both the German *Geist* and occult mysticism at his Jena home. Joel's book depicts Nietzsche as a romantic profoundly affected by emotion, morality, the sorrow of the world, and a lust for the infinite, and portrays his will to power as the means for penetrating the infinite.[2] By 1931, Alfred Bäumler (1887-1968), who would become the Third Reich's official Nietzsche scholar, had fully "Nazified" Nietzsche by emphasizing the power components in his philosophy and categorically rejecting "passive" doctrines like that of eternal recurrence – potentially his most "Hindu" doctrine.[3] Concurrently, national socialists in organizations such as the Vril and Thule Societies were exploring a variety of topics in occult mysticism, such as Rosicrucianism and the thought of figures, such as G. I. Gurdjieff (1872-1949) and Madame Helena P. Blavatsky (1831-1891), the latter of whom claimed to be in telepathic contact with spiritual masters in Tibet.[4] While most scholars these days consider such figures to be "crackpots" (to use Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke's candidly subjective term), the Nazi preoccupation with their thought may be seen as an outgrowth of Nietzsche's attempt to "make the metaphysical physical." That is to say, they drew inspiration from the human experience of the metaphysical, or mysticism, rather than from conventional religion or metaphysics themselves.

In perhaps the most bizarre expression of the Nazi misappropriation of Asian symbols and language, the history of which is well known, the regime sponsored an

Schutzstaffel (SS) mission to Tibet in 1938-39 in search of racial perfection among the remnants of an imagined Aryan race, which would justify their views on the advance of world history and Germany's place in it. Groups such as the Thule Society, which like earlier German neo-pagan groups adopted the Hindu and Buddhist swastika as their symbol, claimed that tunnels to the lost world of a perfect race were to be found in Tibet.[5] In *Mein Kampf* (published 1925-26), Hitler had speculated that the purity of Aryan (Germanic) blood could be restored by second contact with the pure blood of the descendents of the original Aryans, and, as Alex McKay points out, Tibetans seemed the most likely candidates. While the group of five *Waffen-SS* troops was theoretically there to establish a diplomatic alliance with Tibet, from which the Nazis might have eventually attacked British India, their racial pseudo-scientific mission of finding traces of the Aryan race was paramount, for "Nazi leaders such as Heinrich Himmler [and Rudolf Hess, both members of the Thule Society] believed that Tibet might harbor the last of the original Aryan tribes, the legendary forefathers of the German race, whose leaders possessed supernatural powers that the Nazis could use to conquer the world" (McKay 66).

Prior to the mission, German scholars studied texts of the Tibetan Bon faith, which predates Buddhism in Tibet, collected from an earlier mission by zoologist Ernst Schäfer, in the hopes of finding elements of older, Aryan religion.[6] Schäfer, by 1938 a member of the SS's*Ahnenerbe Forschungs und Lehrgemeinschaft* [Ancestral

Heritage Research and Teaching Society], which was involved in encephalometry and racial blood typing and claimed to be able to distinguish between Aryan and non-Aryan blood, was sent to lead this mission. Their studies, however, yielded little from the complex writings of the amalgamated religious systems of Tibet. "The mission did not encounter any mystic masters, find any long-lost Aryan brothers, or obtain any secret powers with which to save Hitler's Third Reich from ultimate defeat" (McKay 92). Further missions were planned but never were carried out due to activities in Europe, however all five of the members of the 1938-39 mission survived into the 1980s and ostensibly stuck to their convictions about the link between Germanic "Aryans" and Asian "Aryans."

One of the most influential Neo-Nazi perpetuators of the Hindu-Aryan myth in the twentieth-century, Savitri-Devi (1905-1982), even contended that Adolf Hitler himself was an incarnation of Vishnu. A Frenchwoman of Greek-English birth who was obsessed by the Aryan myth, she became an admirer of German National Socialism in the late 1920s. She immigrated to India inthe early 1930s to experience the cradle of the Aryan race at first hand and remained there throughout the Second World War only to return to Europe in the war's aftermath as a Neo-Nazi apologist. She believed that the Third Reich was a rehearsal for an Aryan paradise and that Adolf Hitler was the incarnation of the last avatar of Vishnu whose intervention in the cycle of the ages was essential to the restoration of the Golden Age.[7] On the other

hand, while Hitler was not Vishnu, he may in some depressing ways be seen as both the culmination and betrayer of the Indo-German legacy that began when the *Humanisten* appropriated Tacitus and other Roman writers in their quest to understand their origins and establish their place in the mosaic of world cultures.

Mosse's "Crisis of German Ideology," which he feels led to the catastrophe of the Holocaust, is the late nineteenth-century call among *volkisch* devotees for a "German revolution" to liquidate dangerous new developments since unification and to guide the nation back to its original, cultural-historical purpose as they conceived it (Crisis of German Ideology 4).

> According to many Volkish theorists, the nature of the soul of a Volk is determined by the native landscape. Thus the Jews, being a desert people, are viewed as shallow, arid, "dry" people, devoid of profundity and totally lacking in creativity. Because of the barrenness of the desert landscape, the Jews are a spiritually barren people. They thus contrast markedly with the Germans, who, living in the dark, mist-shrouded forests, are deep, mysterious, profound. Because they are so constantly shrouded in darkness, they strive toward the sun, and are truly *Lichtmenschen* (ibid. 4-5).

While such climatic determinism, cited earlier among thinkers of the early Enlightenment, would become a part of the German National Socialist explanation for Aryanism, the Nazis never really accepted evolutionary biology because it postulated

that a race contained within itself the seeds of success or failure without need of any adversary.[8] The Nazi revolution was thus a "revolution of the soul" fostered by a middle class that advocated a society theoretically neither Marxist nor capitalist, but supposedly based on a cultural renewal that supposedly kept the bourgeoisie in power. Once the Nazi party came to power, however, one witnesses the emergence of the ideal of total obedience to the leader, encapsulated in the twin concepts of *befehlnotstand* and the *Führerprinzip*, the former of which designates blind obedience to authority, the latter the structure of the order of obedience in the Third Reich. That is to say, early in the development of German National Socialism the theme of law and order ran strong for a nation that was held to have disintegrated from strong Prussian military sovereignty into a weak republic plagued by unemployment and social instability. To the Nazis this meant that one was only answerable for ones actions to one's immediate superior, and on up the hierarchy, and obedience was prized even above conscience. Obedience was already ingrained in the German family dynamic and workplace, but when the penalty for disobedience became, in many cases, death, obedience took on a new tenor. The extent of any kind of middle class power stopped here.

Such principles are indicative of a hierarchy in which extremely subjective demands are endowed with apparent objectivity and universal purpose. It is difficult, however, to draw direct connections between a Fichtean or Nietzschean self-creating

subject and nihilism associated with the Hindu or Buddhist void, much less to argue the cause of a product of such a subject and void. Such tendencies may only be understood as single strands within the complex intellectual history of late modern Europe. This study, which has concerned itself with, among other topics, supposed genealogies, may, however, be brought to a strange and ironic full circle by noting that the Nazi movement was itself profoundly influential on Indian Hindu Nationalism, thus requiting this "Aryan Romance." While European intellectuals, and Germans in particular, have spent much of the last sixty years understanding the facts and sources of genocide under the Nazi regime, similar events, though on a much smaller scale, have occurred in India and elsewhere.

The Indian nationalist movement began in the 1930s, while the British Raj still ruled India and coincident with the rise of Nazi power, but died down after independence (1947) and the defeat of Hitler. It has, however, strongly re-emerged, with particular violence since 1992. While the Indian Congress Party under Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) strove to unite Hindus and Muslims against the British, Hindu nationalists of the 1940s formed the neo-fascist paramilitary Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which directly imitated European fascist movements of the time and sought to unite Hindus against Muslims. The RSS, which is still in existence, wears khaki uniforms and employs a militaristic salute that differs from that of the Nazis only in the angle of the arm.[9] "The RSS aims to create

a corps of dedicated paramilitary zealots who will bring about a revival of what it sees as the lost Hindu golden age of national strength and purity" (Dalrymple 63). Its adherents believe that religious minorities may continue to live in India only if they acknowledge that it is a Hindu nation.

In contrast to the accepted historical position of the 1930s – that the "Aryans" came down into the Indian subcontinent from what is now Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran and subdued the Dravidian cultures of the South, adopting their religion – Madhav Golwalkar, the early RSS leader who formulated their position on Indian pre-history, believed that the "Aryans" were indigenous to India and were always Hindu. For Golwalkar, the enemy was not British but Muslim. He sought to emulate Hitler's treatment of religious minorities to sustain the "purity" of the race and its culture. In We, or our nationhood defined (1939), Gowalkar relies on the definition of a nation furnished by Johann Kaspar Bluntschli (1808-1881) in his Lehre vom modernen Staat (1875) as masses united by birth and race rather than on the English and French definitions used by the Congress leaders, in which the nation is defined in universalistic terms, such as the role of individual will and the social contract.[10] Golwalkar "probably devalued the religious content of Hindu identity because the heterogeneity of Hinduism militated against the project for national unity. But the latter could be promoted by emphasizing race" (Jaffrelot 55). Nehru therefore

denounced the RSS in 1947 as proceeding along strict Nazi lines, and as a result, ruined the organization's reputation for over twenty years.

Between 1999 and 2004, however, when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Hindu nationalist party founded as the political wing of the RSS, was in power, they placed the "correct" interpretation of ancient Indian history at the forefront of its debates. As the Hindu far right has attempted to bring historians under its direct control and to rewrite standard history textbooks, the kinds of arguments that are usually the purview of scholars have recently in fact been the cause of street-riots. Dalrymple notes that the ransacking of one of India's leading centers of historical research, the Bhandarkar Oriental Institute, in Pune on January 5, 2004 by two hundred Hindu militants left an estimated 18,000 volumes damaged, including a first-century manuscript of the Mahabharata, an important set of inscriptions on palm leaves, and a very early copy of the Rig Veda once used by Max Müller.[11] This riot had been incited by a footnote in a work on a Hindu king, Shivaji, by an American scholar that intimated that the monarch might have been an illegitimate child. In the wake of this riot, infuriated Indian historians published editorials attacking the "Talibanization" of India:

> In the land of Mahatma Gandhi and the tradition of nonviolence, this was not the only case in which an obscure scholarly work on Indian history and religion has produced violent responses from India's Hindu nationalists. An

> increasing number of scholars both in India and abroad have found themselves the targets of hate campaigns from Hindu extremists and the 'cybernationalists' of the Indian diaspora" (Dalrymple 62)

Targeted Indian historians, such as D. N. Jha, argue that the actions of such mobs, which now threaten speakers at lectures, attack art exhibitions and libraries, and send death threats to scholars, apparently encouraged by many politicians, amount to terrorism. The work of Romila Thapar, the most influential Indian historian of the 1950s, emphasizes the religious tolerance of Mughal emperors, such as Akbar (1542-1605), whose great-grandson was Dara Shukoh, the first translator of the Bhagavad-Gita. Thapar's emphasis on toleration is not to say that there have not always been clashes between the two faiths in India.

Indeed, since 1992, when Hindu militants slaughtered over 1,400 Muslims in Bombay alone, both the amount of bloodshed and the power of the far right over Muslim minorities have increased greatly, as is evident from the state-sponsored pogroms in Gujarat in April 2002. Not to mention the fact that in the last fifteen years an estimated 80,000 have died due to the Pakistan-backed anti-India insurgency in Kashmir, a region Salman Rushdie has referred to as "Paradise" and part of the area from which the "Aryans" were supposed to have come.[12] In 2000, as part of what has been called the "saffronization" of Indian textbooks, a passage in Thapar's Ancient India noting that cows were eaten in the Vedic period was removed from the

book without the author's permission.[13] Such challenges to the purported homogeneity and sanctity of Hindu history have been violently attacked. In fact, "any suggestion that medieval Indian civilization might have developed its extraordinary richness specifically because of its multiethnic, multi-religious character was suppressed" (ibid. 65). The government that has replaced the BJP administration has authorized schools to return to the old, more balanced textbooks if they wished. Nevertheless, one hopes that such a-historical myths as those propagated by the RSS will end as Indian historians find more readers outside of India to corroborate their arguments. Hegel argued in The Philosophy of History that political revolutions did not matter to Hindus because they did not change one's lot in life, which is governed by the caste system. Pankaj Mishra, however, sums up what Hegel was trying to get at by quoting Gandhi for whom "that which is permanent and therefore necessary eludes the historian of events. Truth transcends history."[14]

Anatol Lieven argues in his recent book on American nationalism that if nationalism is the hope of a nation's future destiny, patriotism is the love of a nation's past (Lieven 6). Both Indo-Germans and other *volkisch* Germans have looked back at their own history in attempts to write that history, but few of them would use any version of the term "patriot," for theirs was a struggle to create a culture unified by language and mythology. In the United States, the term "patriot" has enjoyed far more popularity than the term "nationalist" for it has been intrinsically linked to ideas

of America's democratic history. However, as Europe, at least theoretically, heads toward the anachronization of the idea of nationalism, Americans who see themselves as patriotic appear increasingly nationalistic to many here and abroad. This is largely due to the fact that the nationalism of a sizeable minority of Americans in 2005 bears many similarities to the spiritual nationalism of the Hindu far right: a denial of historical wrongs committed by their constituencies, a profound distrust of empirical science and intellectual rationalism, and faith in a spirituality that relieves one of the responsibility of compassion.

Pinkard observes that

> the emotional force of the idea of 'revolution' (whether a socialist revolution, a revolution in the arts, or a revolution in spirituality) that hung around until roughly 1989 was the basis of the inchoate hope that something would come along to change things so that our freedom would now be finally realized, that the anxieties accompanying it would finally either disappear or themselves be integrated into some workable whole (Pinkard 360).

Contemporary nationalism in India, in the United States, and among certain constituencies in Europe seems, however, bent on polarization, on demonizing those who oppose it, and on seeking the disappearance of the sources of their anxieties, along with the symptoms themselves. Rather than the fear of infinity and nihilism cited earlier as one stream of thought from Aristotle to Nietzsche, spiritual

nationalists have cast their lot with transcendent faith that sanctions harmful action in the name of equanimity, instead of with a philosophical system, such as Schopenhauer's, that, at least theoretically, results in sympathetic action.

In the end, the Jena Romantics may not have been so wildly off the mark in finding the doctrines of Spinoza edifying. Spinoza perhaps would have understood the teachings of Sanskrit literature much more profoundly and accurately than any of the Indo-Germans, for he understood the place of mere humanity in the scheme of the "dynamically sublime" universe, and thus, it may be argued, understood humility. The idea of revolution may re-emerge in the foreseeable future, but whether a metaphysical revolution in the distance or a Nietzschean revolution close at hand, the dissociation of a metaphysical ideal of culture from the socio-economic ideal of the nation lies at its core

Notes

INTRODUCTION: NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF

[1] For a detailed account of the creation story of Hinduism, as it appears in Hindu texts such as the Rig Veda, Taittirya Samhita, Maitrayani Samhita, and Satapatha Brahmana, see Kramrisch 3-19. Kramrisch's study of the various aspects and representations of the god Shiva concerns many of the destructive elements in Hindu thought and iconography and thus treats at length the idea of fire arising out of a void.

[2] Seife 67.

[3] See Smith and Karpinski iii-iv.

[4] Ibid. 1-11.

[5] See Béguin, Beiser, Gay, Hoffmeister.

[6] Joachimsen, Die Reformation als Epoche der deutschen Geschichte 41.

[7] Roseman 1.

[8] In the Rig Veda, the Dasas are described as the dark-skinned enemies of the light-skinned Aryas. See Bryant 61-63, in which he cites Srinivas Iyengar's critique of Max Müller's and others' racial reading of the it (1914).

[9] Dalrymple 63.

[10] It should be noted that throughout this text the epithet "Gautama Buddha" (which is the surname and title, as in "President Clinton") is used to refer to Siddhartha Gautama (c.563-c.483 BC), who is considered to be the "historical Buddha" (See Schuhmacher and Woerner 332-33), and the "founder" of Buddhism.

CHAPTER 1: GENESIS ON THE GANGES

[1] McCrindle, Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian pp. 120ff.

[2] Life of Apollonius of Tyana III,16 and VI,10-11 (Dahlquist 50).

[3] *Brahman* is the eternal, imperishable Absolute; the supreme nondual reality of *Vedanta* [the philosophy of the Upanishads] (not to be confused with the god Brahma). *Brahman* is a concept that has no equivalent in the religions of dualism, all of which feature a personal God. As absolute consciousness, *Brahman* is an abstract concept that is not accessible to the thinking mind. In the process of any attempt to render it more concrete, *Brahman* becomes *ishvara* [the Absolute as a personal God, as in Christianity or Islam] (Schuhmacher and Woerner 44).

[4] Nilsson 578.

[5] Indica VII: I-VIII: 3 (Dahlquist 53, from McCindle).

[6] Strategemata I: 1: 1-3 (ibid. 57).

[7] *Trimurti* in Sanskrit literally means "three-form" and means the Hindu trinity of three gods: Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, who symbolize the principles of creation, maintenance, and destruction. *Trimurti* is represented as a body with three heads: Brahma is center, Vishnu to the left, and Shiva to the right. In the Vedas this trinity preceded the trinity of Agni, Vayu, and Surya. A well-known stone sculpture of the *trimurti* is located in a cave on the island of Elefanta, near Bombay.

Brahma is the embodiment of *rajas*, that is, of passions and desires, by whose means the world came into being. Vishnu is the embodiment of *sattva*, the qualities of mercy and goodness, by means of which the world is maintained. Shiva is the embodiment of *tamas*, the qualities of darkness, rage, and destructive fire, by means of which the world will be destroyed. The trinity represents three in one and one in three, just as the Vedas are divided into three (*Samhita* [collected arrangements of songs and sacrifice-related texts], *Brahmana* [manuals of instruction], and *Sutra* [reductions of the content of the *Brahmanas*]) and yet are one. All are contained within the one being that is the true self of all things (Schuhmacher and Woerner 379).

[8] Heracles was a hero considered the son of Zeus and Alcmene, the noblest of mortals. Heracles's legend continued to evolve from pre-Hellenic through Roman times, in Homer and Virgil among others, developing into his Latin double, Hercules. For fuller treatment, see Grimal 183-195.

Krishna is literally in Sanskrit "black" or "dark blue," a symbol for the infinite space of the universe. The name Krishna appears in the Rig Veda, but without reference to the later divinity. The earliest reference to Krishna as the son of Devaki is found in the Chandogya-Upanishad, where he is described as a scholar. The later

god Krishna is the most celebrated hero of Indian mythology and the best known of all deities. He is the eighth incarnation of Vishnu. This hero and *avatara* [avatar], around whom so many fables, legends, and tales arose, lived at a time when the Hindus had not yet left northwest India. He is a prominent figure in the Mahabharata, and as the "Divine One" he instructs Arjuna in the Bhagavad-Gita, the most famous "song" of Hinduism. Here Arjuna addresses Krishna as the supreme, universal consciousness, as divine yet present before the gods, as unborn and omnipresent (Schuhmacher and Woerner 185). For treatment of Megasthenes' identification of Heracles with Krishna, see Dahlquist 33-35.

Prometheus was a Titan, cousin of Zeus, son of Iapetus and Clymene (Asia), and brother of Atlas and Epimetheus. In Hesiod's Theogony (c. 700 BC) simply the benefactor of mankind, Prometheus later is attributed with having given fire to human beings and was thus, by order of Zeus, chained to a rock in the Caucasus where an eagle would continually consume his liver, which would continually renew itself (Grimal 376).

[9] Biblioteca Historicus II: 39: 1-4 (Dahlquist 57).

[10] Ibid. 177.

[11] Indica VIII: 4-IX: 12 (ibid. 63-65).

[12] Geographia XV: 1: 8b (ibid. 59).

[13] Ibid. 186.

[14] See Dahlquist, Kirfel, Lassen, McCrindle, Mitter, and Timmer.

[15] Dahlquist 180-89.

[16] Ibid. 10; see also Schwanbeck and Truesdall S. Brown.

[17] Allen, Dahlquist, Kirfel, Lassen, McCrindle, Mitter, and Timmer are only the most prominent of many scholars since the 1880s that have treated the influence of Megasthenes on Roman historians.

[18] Godley iii, 377.

[19] Ibid. 94-106, iv 40.

[20] Ibid. ii 42, 123, 144.

[21] Mitter 7.

[22] Rubiés 36-37.

[23] Il milione has been called Milione, Le Divisament dou Monde, Livre des Merveilles dou Monde, De Mirabilibus Mundi, Milione, and Emilione in its various editions and by various sources, including Polo's own family. See Gabriella Ronchi's "Nota al testo" for a more complete manuscript history (Polo 663-87).

[24] "Shakyamuni Buddha" is an epithet that was given to Gautama Buddha since he was the prince of the Shakya clan. Allen appears to have found the rendering "Sakyamuni Burkhan" in an English translation of Polo (Waugh, 1989). In Il Milione, Rustichello renders "Shakyamuni Buddha" as "Sergamon Borgani."

[25] See Russell, Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages 68-70.

[26] Baltrusaitis 11.

[27] Although concerned primarily with ethnography, Rubiés' book notes that beginning with Ibn Battuta, Muslim accounts of India are more reliably accurate, or, at least, belie different biases than Christian accounts (Rubiés 14, 22-3, 58).

[28] Ibid. 36.

[29] See note 9 above on the respective roles of Brahma and Vishnu in the *gunas* schema.

[30] These essences extend to other areas; for example, in *ayurveda*, *rajasic* foods are bitter, sour, salty, hot; *sattvic* foods are fresh, juicy, light, nourishing, and *tamasic* foods are dry, old, or unpalatable.

[31] Kramrisch quotes the Linga Purana (1.65.129), the Vishnu Purana (30.1), the Maitrayaniya Upanishad (5.2), and the Svetasvatara Upanishad (1.5), and cites Sastri and Radhakrishnan in support of this point.

[32] Rubiés. 8-9.

[33] Ibid. 308.

[34] Ibid. 308-09.

[35] Allen 33-34.

[36] Poliakov 24.

[37] Which of the three French monks by the name of Salvius spoke thus – the first the bishop of Amiens (d. 625), the second a missionary supposed to have come from Angoulême and murdered in Valenciennes (d. c.768), or the last a Norman hermit in the forest of Bray with a reputation for miracles (Farmer 426) – is not known. Regardless, the contrast of Roman with "Gothic" comportment and culture would have been evident throughout France in this period.

[38] Cited in Poliakov 29.

[39] Weisgerger, <u>Die geschichtliche Kraft der deutschen Sprache</u> 35-79.

[40] Augustus considered that Domitian Germanicus would succeed him, until Gnaeus Calpurnius Piso, Governor of Syria, by order of Tiberius, poisoned Germanicus in Antioch, at age 19.

[41] Borst 659.

[42] For a more in depth discussion of Luther's role in these debates, see Ozment 11-18.

[43] Knobel 70.

[44] Poliakov 93.

[45] Berman 44.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Joachimsen 56.

[48] Deism is the view that true religion is natural religion, rather than revealed religion. That is to say that God's benevolence is disinterested, but he has ensured that the knowledge needed for happiness is universally accessible, thus obviating the need for salvation by special revelation. True religion is an expression of a universal human nature whose essence is reason and is the same in all times and places (Audi 188).

[49] In the Hindu creation story, the first man and woman are Adimo (or Adima) and Heva. Brahma, as the first god in the *trimurti*, is God in his aspect as creator of the universe. Originally Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva were accorded equal veneration, but in modern-day India, Brahmanism has diminished in importance compared with Vaishnavism, Shaivism, and Shaktism (Tantrism). The concept of Brahma belongs that of *Ishvara*, that of a personal god as creator of the world, and is by no means to be confused with *Brahman*, the supreme non-dual reality. Brahma is often depicted as having four faces and four arms that hold such symbols as the texts of the *Vedas* and prayer beads (Schuhmacher and Woerner 43).

[50] Gillespie 86.

[51] Mitter 199.

[52] Ibid. 106.

CHAPTER 2: OMINOUS OVERTURES

[1] Gillespie 69.

[2] Ibid. 70.

[3] The Seduction of Unreason 113-118. In this section, Wolin specifically treats direct lines drawn in the 1930s and '40s between Herder and Adolf Hitler by the German literary guild, the Nazi party itself, and philosophers such as Hans-Georg Gadamer.

[4] See Joachim Whaley, "The ideal of youth in late-eighteenth-century Germany," in Roseman (47-68).

[5] Allen and Clark 147.

[6] As cited in Ergang 7.

[7] Ibid. 23.

[8] Glasenapp 12. Manicheism is a syncretistic religion founded by the Babylonian prophet Mani (AD 216-277), who claimed a revelation from God and saw himself as a member of a line that included Gautama Buddha, Zoroaster, and Jesus Christ (Audi 460). *Om mani padme hum* means literally in Sanskrit: "OM, jewel in the lotus, hum." OM is the most comprehensive and venerable symbol of spiritual knowledge in Hinduism. It indicates form as well as sound, and symbolizes the physical, mental, and unconscious worlds within (Schuhmacher and Woerner 255-56). A *bodhisattva* is literally in Sanskrit an "enlightenment being." In Mahayana Buddhism (which seeks enlightenment for all beings, not just the individual as in Hinayana Buddhism) a *bodhisattva* is a being who seeks Buddha-hood through the systematic practice of the perfect virtues but renounces complete entry into *nirvana* until all sentient beings are relieved from suffering (ibid. 39-40).

[9] Muhlmann 57.

[10] Cited in Schwab 226.

[11] Poliakov 171-72.

[12] Ergang 72.

[13] Ibid. 85-86.

[14] Gillespie 89.

[15] Brought to India by [Indo-] Aryan tribes around 1500 BC, Sanskrit gave rise to the Prakrit languages, which gave rise to modern Indian languages such as Hindi and Bengali. Sanskrit is written in a syllabary known as *Devanagari*, which comes from the ancient Brahmi script (Katzner 174-75). The name *Devanagari* comes from the city of Nagara, with the prefix *Deva* ("god") attached, because they are believed to have been taught by a divinity who prescribed their phonetic order of arrangement. Brahmi is itself reputed to be related to Aramaic, although the Indians used their sophisticated knowledge of phonology and grammar to organize their alphabets differently from that of the Aramaic alphabet (Robinson 175).

[16] The Zend-Avesta is the sacred writings of the Zoroastrians or Parsis and is usually attributed to Zoroaster himself. Zend is the language used, also called Old Bactrian, which forms with Old Persian the Iranian group of the Indo-European languages (Rey 143).

[17] The Upanishads form the final portion of the revealed portion of the *Vedas* and are the principal basis of *Vedanta*, the philosophical conclusion derived from them. Central to the Upanishads is the significance of *atman*, the individual soul, and *Brahman*, the impersonal Absolute (Schuhmacher and Woerner 393).

[18] Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1539), the "First Master" or "founder" of Sikhism, now the fifth largest religion in the world, strove to establish a religious system that had both Hindu and Muslim elements, but had no caste system and preached non-violence.

[19] Mitter 154.

[20] Jainism is an unorthodox Indian religion that rejects the authority of the Vedas. Its tradition refers to twenty-four teachers, with no belief in God. The Jains teach that divinity dwells within every soul, and perfect souls are venerated as the Supreme Spirit. Liberation is attained through right belief, right knowledge, and right action, whereby the practice of non-injury of living beings is particularly stressed (Schuhmacher and Woerner 158-59). I once attempted to visit a Jain temple in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan where adherents were such devout believers in non-injury that they were reputed not even to wear any clothing. Visitors, however, were not allowed.

[21] Mitter 143-44.

[22] Ibid. 144.

[23] Their mission then as now is stated in full at: www.sal.org.uk.

[24] Allen 47-48.

[25] Ibid. 48.

[26] Mahabharata means literally in Sanskrit "the great epic of the descendants of Bharata"; next to the *Ramayana* the second monumental epic of Hindu literature. Its authorship is ascribed to the mythical sage Vyasa; however between the fifth century

BC and the second century AD a great many authors and "compilers" (Skt. *vyasa*) indubitably worked on the text, which gradually came to include the greater part of India's popular myths, fables, and fairy tales (Schuhmacher and Woerner 211). The Mahabharata is about six times the length of the Bible. The Bhagavad-Gita means literally in Sanskrit "song of the exalted one" and is a philosophical didactic poem, considered the "Gospel" of Hinduism. It constitutes the sixth book of the *Mahabharata* (ibid. 31).

[27] Poliakov 128.

[28] This essay was one of Jones's eleven anniversary discourses at the Asiatic Society. The other ten addresses were: "On the Orthography of Asiatick Words" (1784), "On the Hindus" (1786), "On the Arabs" (1787), "On the Tartars" (1788), "On the Persians" (1789), "On the Chinese" (1790), "On the Borderers, Mountaineers, and Islanders of Asia" (1791), "On the Origin and Families of Nations" (1792), "On Asiatick History, Civil and Natural" (1793), and "On the Philosophy of the Asiaticks" (1794). All of these were published in the society's journal *Asiatick Researches*, vols. i-iv, which began to be published in 1788.

[29] At this point, in one of his wilder speculations, Jones thought that Gautama Buddha or "Boodh" was an Indian ruler who was born around 1027 BC, in Ethiopia.

[30] The law book of Manu [also called Manusmrti] is said to date to ancient times and to derive from Manu, literally "man," that is, the progenitor of humanity; however, it bears signs of the work of various hands. One of the authors is held to be Vaivasvata, founder of the solar race of kings (Schuhmacher and Woerner 221, 397). Abhigyaana-Shaakuntalam is the story of the love of Shakuntala, a heavenly nymph, for the King Dushyanta. Its source is the Mahabharata (ibid. 313). The Hitopadesha means literally in Sanskrit "good advice" or "friendly instruction," is a collection of instructive tales and animal fables supposed to have been composed between the tenth and fourteenth centuries (ibid. 131). The Gitagovinda is a lyrical poem in twelve cantos composed in the early twelfth century by Jayadeva, the court poet of the Bengali king Lakshmanasena. The work celebrates Krishna's youth as Govinda, the shepherd boy in the forest of Vrindavan, and the love between Krishna and Radha, who symbolizes the ardent love of the human soul for the divine (ibid. 119).

CHAPTER 3: FEAR OF INFINITY

[1] Gillespie 106, Pinkard 134.

[2] Kritische Schriften II, 316.

[3] Ibid. 319.

[4] For an explanation of the fundamental attributes associated with each diety see the section on the *gunas* on page 28 and note 9 on page 64.

[5] Cited in Schwab 223.

[6] Vishnu's consort, for example, is Lakshmi; Shiva's is Shakti, Parvati, Kali, or Durga, depending on the story.

[7] There are many books on both sides of the debate over whether Jesus went to India, beginning in the 1890s. Recent contributions to the theory that he did go there include: Ahmad, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam. Jesus in India: being an account of Jesus' escape from death on the cross and of his journey to India. London: London Mosque, 1978; Hassnain, Fida and Dahan Levi. The Fifth Gospel. Srinagar, Kashmir: Dastgir, 1988; Deardorff, James W. Jesus in India: a reexamination of Jesus' Asian traditions in the light of evidence supporting reincarnation. San Francisco: International Scholars, 1994; and Ahmad, Khwaja Nazir. Jesus in Heaven on Earth: Journey of Jesus to Kashmir, His Preaching to the Lost Tribes of Israel, and Death and Burial in Srinagar. Lahore: Ahamadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam, 1998.

[8] Friedrichsmeyer 82.

[9] Taylor 41, Pinkard 172.

[10] Schwab 220.

[11] Ibid. 203-4.

[12] Cited in Schwab 205.

[13] Schwab 222. While Schwab's point seems likely, I have not been able to corroborate it, as I have not had access to Schelling's letters to the Schlegels.

[14] This term of address "Govinda" for Krishna refers to his role as knower of earth and the senses and as the protector of cows (Skt. *go* means both "cow" and "earth") (ibid. 120).

[15] This type of plot structure, based on union, separation, and reunion, is to be found around the world. What may be unique about such structure in the Gitagovinda are its qualities of repetition and ritual, which are indicative of Hinduism's doctrine of reincarnation and its emphasis on devotional practice.

[16] Pinkard 173.

[17] Pinkard 187.

[18] Taylor 41.

[19] Taylor 42.

[20] Pinkard 195.

[21] Irony, in its modern sense, however, has taken on much more definite commitments as it has come to include the entire field of satire.

[22] For treatment of Lovell's nihilism see Gillespie pp. 105-09.

[23] Weisgerber 102.

[24] This Alexander Hamilton is no relation to the American military hero and politician of the same name (1755-1804).

[25] Schwab 74-75.

[26] Ibid. 219.

[27] Personal interview, 17 April 2004, Ann Arbor, MI. This conversation centered primarily on the dichotomy between Vishnu and Shiva in the Puranic tradition, and the extension of the same prejudices to Buddhism. M. Deshpande is Professor of Sanskrit and Linguistics at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

[28] The Puranic tradition stems from the teachings of the Upanishads, that is, of *Vedanta*, but through the use of the Puranas, a popularized version of *Vedanta*. The *Darsanas*, or schools of Hindu philosophy, are strict, esoteric, and meant only for the learned Brahmin caste. The Puranas are meant for the masses with supposedly inferior intellects. Like the parables of the New Testament, the stories are told to common people to help them understand higher truths, and stress devotion. In the Christian tradition, however, the usefulness of the parables is not a question of purported inferiority, as in the caste system, but of educational opportunities and background. The aim of the Puranas is to impress on the minds of the masses the teachings of the Upanishads and to generate in them devotion to God through concrete examples: myths; parables; legends; lives of saints, kings and great men; allegories and chronicles of major historical events. The language of the Vedas is archaic, and the subtle philosophy of *Vedanta* and the Upanishads is extremely difficult to grasp and assimilate. Hence, the Puranas are useful as they present philosophical ideas and important Hindu teachings in a simplified manner.

Among the large number of *puranas*, eighteen are considered major *puranas*, six of which are addressed to Vishnu and considered *sattvic*, six to Brahma and considered to be *rajasic*, and six to Shiva and considered *tamasi*c. In the "Shiva-Purana," Shiva is elegised, the importance of the decaying part of the cycle of existence is emphasized, and an inferior, often belittling, position is given to Vishnu. The opposite is true in the "Vishnu-Purana," which emphasizes that the *tamasic*, the Shaivic, is to be avoided. The "Vishnu-Purana" is the earliest reference to Gautama Buddha being an incarnation of Vishnu – the tenth, after Krishna. Vishnu appears only at times when demons (whom Vishnaivic traditions view as devotees of Shiva) dominate. Of particular importance for Schlegel is the fact that in the "Vishnu-Purana" the pursuit of positive forces such as the Buddha, enlightenment, and superiority are constantly juxtaposed with negative forces such as monsters, the demonic, and the void.

[29] See Godley ii 42, 123, 144.

[30] Deshpande and Hook 3.

[31] Poliakov 191.

[32] Cited in Schwab 206.

[33] Herling 18-19.

[34] Cited in Schwab 76-77.

[35] Cited in Poliakov 194.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Gillespie 97.

[38] Pinkard 123.

[39] Gillespie 98.

[40] Poliakov 99-100.

[41] Ibid. 193.

CHAPTER 4: GOALS WITHOUT GODS

[1] Mitter 218.

[2] Ibid. 202.

[3] Ibid. 217-18. For fuller treatment of Creuzer, Hegel, and symbolism in Indian art see Mitter pp. 202-220 and Heinrich Zimmer, Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization, Princeton UP, 1946.

[4] Poliakov 198.

[5] Ibid. 196-202.

[6] La Mer (1861), La Sorcière (1862), La Bible de l'humanité (1864), and La Montagne (1868) (Orr 152-153).

[7] Moira Nicholls argues in "The Influences of Eastern Thought on Schopenhauer's Doctrine of the Thing-in-Itself" that in 1813 "there were relatively few scholarly sources of information about Eastern thought available to Europeans" (Janaway 176). Still, there had already been a plethora of publications on Indian topics, particularly in English (some of which are cited earlier) – and Schopenhauer spoke and read English

fluently. Nicholls does provide, however, invaluable documentation of Schopenhauer's many oriental sources.

[8] Although, I have not been able to ascertain what percentage of Schopenhauer's total library such orientalist works make up, their number, as well as the time span over which they were published, certainly indicates Schopenhauer's profound and prolonged interest in Asian topics. See Nicholls in Janaway (197-204) for an exact listing of which Indological works were sources for each of Schopenhauer's works.

[9] Nicholls cites Frederick Copleston on this fact: "Schopenhauer," The Great Philosophers, Bryan Magee, Ed., Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987. As noted above, the Upanishads (literally "to sit down near to," that is, at the feet of the guru) form the final portion of the *shruti*, or revealed part of Vedic teaching, and are the principal basis of *Vedanta*, the philosophical conclusion derived from the Vedas. Within *Vedanta* there are three primary branches of interpretation, based on medieval commentaries that differ over questions of dualism. Thee is the school of *Advaita-Vedanta* or "non-dualism," whose main teacher was the eighth-century philosopher Sankara; *Vishishtadvaita-Vedanta* or "qualified non-dualism," whose chief representative is Ramanuja in the twelfth century (and which R. C. Zaehner notes is much closer in spirit to the teachings of the Bhagavad-Gita); and *Dvaita-Vedanta* or "dualism," which developed in the thirteenth century under Madhva.

[10] Janaway 182.

[11] Schopenhauer also cites Calderón, Pindar, Shakespeare, and Sophocles in support of this idea.

[12] Janaway 204.

[13] Fox 255.

[14] The Four Noble Truths, the basis of Buddhist teaching, are: (1) all existence is characterized by suffering, (2) desire is the cause of suffering, (3) elimination of desire can cause the cessation of suffering, and (4) the Eightfold Path leads to the cessation of suffering (Schuhmacher and Woerner 109).
The Eightfold Path is composed of: (1) view based on the Four Noble Truths; (2) resolve in favor of renunciation and nonviolence; (3) avoidance of harming speech; (4) avoidance of harming actions; (5) avoidance of ignoble professions; (6)

cultivation of what is karmically wholesome; (7) mindfulness of body, emotions, and thought; (8) concentration on spiritual absorption (ibid. 98-99).

[15] Atwell x.

[16] The best known other branches of and elaborations on yoga are: *karma-yoga* (selfless action), *bhakti-yoga* (devout love of god), *raja-yoga* ("royal yoga"), *kundalini-yoga* (Tantric), and *jñana-yoga* (the path of abstract knowledge) (Schuhmacher and Woerner 429). The term *raja-yoga* comes from the Yoga-Sutra by Patanjali, second century BC. Patanjali contrasts *hatha* (physical postures) as a preparatory discipline with *raja*, the other disciplines of yoga, which he considers to be more advanced (see Feuerstein 239-40.)

[17] Pinkard 337.

[18] Schopenhauer uses the term "Idee," translated into English as "Idea," with a capital "I," however, the term "idea" should be taken with caution, since such objects are not creations of a mind, but exist independently of thought. (This distinction is more nebulous in German since all nouns in German begin with an initial capital letter.) While "forms" may be closer to the concept Plato was trying to convey, he uses the singular Greek terms *eidos* [type], as well as *idea* [idea].

[19] Janaway 184.

[20] Kramrisch 104-05. The *Brahmanas* are *shruti* that explain the relationship of the Vedas to specific sacrifical ceremonies.

[21] For more on OM, see Schuhmacher and Woerner 254-55.

[22] Ibid. 259.

[23] In the chapter "The Origin and Fate of the Universe" in A Brief History of Time (1988), Stephen W. Hawking explains some of the difficulties in understanding the state of the universe at a supposed beginning: "In order to predict how the universe should have started off, one needs laws that hold at the beginning of time. If the classical theory of general relativity was correct, the singularity theorems that Roger Penrose and I proved show that the beginning of time would have been a point of infinite density and infinite curvature of space-time. All the known laws of science would break down at such a point" (Hawking 133). One would need at least a

quantum theory of gravity to begin to unravel such laws. Aristotle would still have been unsettled by the infinity found by Hawking and Penrose, but the European fear of the void, or Hindu espousal of it, appear, at present, unfounded. Hawking's partner, Roger Penrose, takes up the question in relation to entropy and the second law of thermodynamics (which is that energy spontaneously tends to flow only from being concentrated in one place to becoming diffused or dispersed and spread out) in The Emperor's New Mind (1989). Penrose refutes the idea that the big bang explains the second law by noting that the primordial fireball would have been a state of "thermal equilibrium," a state of maximum entropy, not minimum entropy as demanded by the second law. He uses this as the jumping off point for a lengthy discussion of black holes and the theoretical "big crunch" as the end of our universe's existence, but admits the possibility that the big crunch could be so far off that no violation of the second law of thermodynamics would be discernible to us in our present epoch.

[24] Janaway 359.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Nietzsche I, 24.

[27] Ibid. 29.

[28] *Bodhisattva*, Skt. lit. "enlightenment being." In Mahayana Buddhism, a *bodhisattva* is a being who seeks buddhahood through the systematic practice of perfect virtues (*paramita*) but renounces complete entry into *nirvana* until all beings are saved. The determining factor for his action is compassion (*karuna*), supported by highest insight and wisdom (*prajna*). A *bodhisattva* provides active help, is ready to take upon himself the suffering of all other beings, and to transfer his own karmic merit to other beings. The way of the *bodhisattva* begins with arousing the thought of enlightenment (*bodhicitta*) and taking the bodhisattva vow (*pranidhana*). The career of a bodhisattva is divided into ten stages (*bhumi*): (1) "extremely joyous" (*rab-dga'-ba*), (2) "stainless" (*dri-med*), (3) "illuminating" (' *od-byed-pa*), (4) "sparkling light" (' *od-phro-ba*), (5) "difficult to cleanse" (*sbyang dka'-ba*), (6) "forward facing" (*mngon-du phyogs-pa*), (7) "far gone" (*ring-du song-ba*), (8) "immovable" (*mi-g.yo-ba*), (9) "most intelligent" (*legs-par blo-gros*), (10) "cloud of Dharma" (*chos-sprin*). The *bodhisattva* ideal replaced in Mahayana and Hinayana the ideal of the *arhat*, whose effort is directed towards the attainment of his own liberation, since this was found to be too narrow and ego-oriented (Schuhmacher and Woerner 39).

A similar ideal is known in Hinduism as that of the *jivanmukta* (Skt., lit. "one liberated while still alive"): one who is still in the body but has freed himself from the bonds of ignorance (*avidya*) and *mâyâ*. Such a one has given up identification with the body and mind and has attained liberation (*mukti*). As the Self (*atman*), he knows that he is one with *Brahman* (ibid. 162).

[29] Nietzsche 66.

CONCLUSION: NATIONALIST REQUITAL

[1] See Mosse, Aschheim.

[2] Mosse, The Crisis of German Ideology 64-65.

[3] Aschheim 234.

[4] The Vril Society was a group convinced that a race of super-beings would emerge from their underground hiding places to rule the world. The Thule Society, which followed the Vril around 1919, was founded in Munich by Baron Rudolf von Sebottendorf, a follower of Blavatsky. The Thule Society drew on the traditions of various orders such as the Jesuits, the Knights Templar, the Order of the Golden Dawn, and the Sufis. It promoted the myth of Thule, a legendary island in the frozen northlands that had been the home of a master race, the original "Aryans" (McKay 67).

[5] The term "swastika" is derived from the Sanskrit *svasti* meaning "happiness" or "well-being." In Hinduism, the swastika is an auspicious figure of a cross, a mystical sign found everywhere on temples and objects of art. In Buddhism, the sign is interpreted as a symbol of the wheel of the teaching (*dharma-chakra*) or of Buddhist teaching in general (Schuhmacher and Woerner 345).

[6] The foundations of Buddhism in Tibet, which exists only in its Mahayana form there, were laid in the 8th century AD under the rulership of King Trisong Detsen (755-97) by the Indian scholar Shantirakshita (representative of the "Middle Way"school of Mahayana or *madhyama*) and by Padmasambhava, the latter of whom is considered the "father" of Tibetan Buddhism (Schuhmacher and Woerner 370). For a biography of Padmasambhava see W.Y. Evans-Wentz, 1954.

Bön, which in Tibetan means literally "invocation" or "recitation," is a general heading in Tibetan Buddhism for various religious currents in Tibet before the introduction of Buddhism by Padmasambhava. The word *bönpo*, which is also used, referred originally to priests with varying functions, but later referred to a developed theoretical doctrinal system that was strongly influenced by foreigners from the neighboring countries to the west. In the beginning of the eleventh century, Bön appeared as an independent school that distinguished itself from Buddhism through its claim to preserve the continuity of the old Bön tradition. This school, which still exists, shares certain teaching with the Nyingmapa school (which derives from Padmasambhava) (ibid. 41). See also Snellgrove pp. 381-528.

[7] Goodrick-Clarke 4-5. Nicholas Goodrich-Clarke's The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults and Their Influence on Nazi Ideology: The Ariosophists of Austria and Germany, 1890-1935 addresses only Western sources of occult mysticism. The addition of his work on Savitri-Devi both rounds out and extends that scholarship by focusing on the Indian component of Nazi thinking as well as the postwar perpetuation of the Aryan myth.

[8] Mosse, The Crisis of German Ideology 103.

[9] Dalrymple 63.

[10] Jaffrelot 54.

[11] Dalrymple 62.

[12] See Pankaj Mishra, "Massacre in Arcadia." The New York Review of Books. LII, 15 (6 October 2005), pp. 8-11. This is a review of Rushdie's new novel, Shalimar the Clown (Random House, 2005), which deals precisely with the subject of the fighting in Kashmir, although Mishra faults him for portraying Kashmir too simplistically as a "pastoral idyll" ruined by ideological violence.

[13] Saffron is the "holy color" of Hinduism as well as of the Hinayana Buddhism of Southeast Asia. (Mahayana Buddhism is known by its burgundy color.)

[14] Mishra 8.

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